

THE POWER OF PERSONAL AND SMALL GROUP EVANGELISM TO STIMULATE THE
CHURCH GROWTH

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I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord. The humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. Psalm 34: 1-3.

ABSTRACT

The incentive to pursue this research came from the understanding that the churches in Kerala, India, were losing their fervency when compared to the churches all over the world, even though Christianity may have come to the land of Kerala as early as AD 52. The importance of personal and small group evangelism in stimulating church growth is studied, and researched upon, especially among the pastors and leaders of the Malayalam District Council of the South India Assemblies of God. Major conclusions include (i) the church should return to the preaching of the basics of the Bible, (ii) every individual should be committed to evangelism as a process, (iii) church leadership should provide needful support and teaching to trainees for effective evangelism.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Kerala, India, is called God's own country, as the land of coconut trees with lakes and rivers, forests and mountains. It also has a great spiritual heritage. Scripture refer to India in Esther 1:1 and 8:9. Although historical accounts differ regarding his visit, tradition states St. Thomas, one of the twelve Apostles, established the church of the Lord Jesus Christ in India around 52 AD.¹

God has a heart for India and for the salvation of its millions of souls. With 2000 years of Christianity in India, the state of Kerala and India may have influenced many other nations across the world to take decisions for Christ; yet, present conditions in the church reflects what is written in Hebrews 5:12, that it needs "someone to teach [us] again the first principles of the oracles of God."² C.F. George writes, "Millions of people there have to be brought to the church of Christ before the return of the Lord. What was the problem and is there anybody to be blamed? Whatever or whoever were the barriers, as the newspaper – comic page has said, 'We have met the enemy, and he is us.'"³

¹ Cyril Bruce Firth, *An Introduction to Indian Church History*, (Madras, India: Christian Literature Society, 1983), 3.

² Hebrews 5:12, unless otherwise noted all Biblical references from the NKJV.

³ Carl F. George with Warren Bird, *How to Break Growth Barriers: Capturing Overlooked Opportunities for Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1993), 18.

It is true that our forefathers lived with limited resources, yet they had a lasting impact on their culture in spite of those limitations. Yet, what does today's Church do when they possess all the resources necessary to extend the kingdom of God?

The District Council of the Assemblies of God of Kerala, home to about 800 leaders and pastors and about 50,000 believers, faces a grave situation in which the churches and their members are not growing in quality and quantity.⁴ During the past 80 years, the Great Commission mandate given by God has not been obeyed as it should. This is a haunting problem as we see unreached millions in Kerala and India; "It matters to God and so it matters to us."⁵

Purpose of the Study

In my early years of ministry, I witnessed the truth of Matthew 16:13-18 in that Jesus Christ himself builds the Church and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." I have personally observed the growth of the Church in Singapore, Germany, Israel, Korea, Canada, USA, and different parts of India in Allahabad, Bangalore, and Madras, making a difference in many parts of the world. Yet, in Kerala and other parts of India, neither the churches nor the number of believers have grown as it they have in other parts of the world where churches are spiritually impacting their communities.

In my own state and country, little progress has been made to develop a Christian culture. The influence of religious groups and false philosophies, such as Hindu

⁴ From South India Assemblies of God Malayalam District Council Office, Punalur on August 8, 2007.

⁵ George, *How to Break Growth Barriers*, 18.

fanatics, the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS), the Bharatiya Janatha Party (BJP), the Nair Service Society (NSS), the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalak (SNDP), the Aggressive Islamic organizations, nominal Christians, Communism, and many other cultic groups push their own agendas that are counter to the Judeo-Christian values found in the Bible. Aleyamma Zachariah has provided a detailed study about these major secular movements in India.⁶

Breaking the Ten Commandments and putting away the Word of God in disobedience intensifies the spiritual darkness in a society. Though God has placed the Church in the world to be a deterrent, to discourage and stop these kinds of ungodly religious influences, the Church itself seems to be impotent in its efforts to stem the flow of this current trend of worldly systems.

What Is the Solution, and Where Can It Be Found?

The true light of the world, Jesus Christ, called his disciples to be “the light of the world” in a dark world of sin and lost men.⁷ He called the Church to be “the salt of the earth.”⁸ Can today’s church achieve these goals as it should have been during the past 2000 years?

Unfortunately, it appears the gates of hell are prevailing in Kerala and in India. Why? Because Christians in Kerala have failed to be effective witnesses of the Lord Jesus

⁶ See Aleyamma Zachariah, *Modern Religious and Secular Movements in India* (Madras: ELS, 1996).

⁷ Matthew 5:14.

⁸ Matthew 5:13.

Christ, the true light and salt, who is the way, the truth and the life, and who builds His kingdom through his people.

We have failed to fulfill the Great Commission that Jesus mandated:

And Jesus came and spoke to them saying: All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.⁹

Jesus also said:

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven.¹⁰

The lack of influence by the true church in society, its non-transformation, and its conformity to the world, is heartbreaking. It seems that only a few churches are growing and impacting the world. However, their efforts seem rather meager when compared to the present overwhelming need. Have we allowed God to shine through us, work with us, or build His Church through us?

Goals of the Study

The growth of the church and its impact upon the community is connected to its spiritual growth and its personal devotion and commitment to the Lord. In addition, it is

⁹ Matthew 28:18-20.

¹⁰ Matthew 5:13 -16.

essential to equip and train as many evangelists as possible that they might become mighty tools in the hands of the Lord to transform the entire nation of India.

My hope is that this study will help Christians who associated with the evangelistic work to grow in godly character, and to project it in their everyday Christian lives. The ultimate goal is to witness Jesus building His Church in Kerala as many millions of people are saved daily through prayer and the ministry of the servants of the Lord who yield themselves under the mighty hand of God.

Importance of the Study

Why This Subject?

The Apostle Paul said:

To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the gentile the unsearchable riches of Christ and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ, to the intent that has the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose what He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in him. Therefore, I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulation for you which is your glory.¹¹

God intends to make known his manifold wisdom through the Church. The Church should preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, and make all see what the fellowship of the mystery is, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in

¹¹ Ephesians 3:8-13, NKJV.

God who created all things through Jesus Christ. It is amazing to know the purpose of Jesus Christ when the Church has intimacy with the Lord.

The magnitude of the awesome responsibility of the Church, who represents the invisible Lord, is commensurate with the world's great needs. Bill Bright, founder and president of the Campus Crusade writes:

The World Almanac estimates that in AD 1 the entire population of the world was only 200 million! In the last century, the world population exploded. Until about 1850, the world population was less than 1 billion. By about 1930 it had doubled into 2 billion. By 1974 the world population had doubled again to 4 billion. The population recently surpassed 6 billion again and at the rate will double again in less than 20 years. Our cities are burgeoning with growth. The fields are white unto harvest. This God's hour, is the most profound window of time in all history. Advances in technology and high speed, worldwide transportation and communication have provided us with new tools for tackling the great commission, the mandate of the Lord with His power, authority and presence, the fulfillment of which is within reach.¹²

This study is important because it can help the church look afresh at the Word of God, regarding the church, evangelism and evangelistic preaching, missions, disciplining, the wisdom and the power of God, the passion of God and passions for souls, leadership, communication, and church growth. The importance of this study will take us back to Jesus and the Apostles, especially Peter and Paul in order to view their evangelistic approach and their problem-solving methods. The church can come back from an inactive traditional mode of settlement, or "the other church did it that way attitude," to embrace the Holy Spirit's vibrant momentum. The gospels, the epistles, and the whole Bible are replete with a community model as the core ingredient that aids in evangelism and discipleship.

¹² Ed Silvoso, *Prayer Evangelism* (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 2004), 15.

Every Christian believer and church leader should realize the need for spiritual growth that results in evangelization. The Lord commands his people to proclaim the good news of his salvation daily. So, why do many try to confine it to occasional, annual, or rare attempted efforts and seasonal inspiration?

Should these gospel lights shine only on rare occasions, or continuously to all, anywhere and anytime? How amazing it would be if the church were to uphold the light of Jesus Christ every day as in Acts 5:42: “And daily in the temple and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.” “And in those days, the number of the disciples was multiplied.”¹³ Can this happen again?

The church could use a number of different evangelistic methods to achieve the goal of evangelizing the world. When some preachers or leaders limit themselves to arranged stage preaching or pulpit preaching to crowds, they miss opportunities to witness to individuals who are lost. We must seek and win them. It is all right if we get an arranged audience and pulpit to preach and teach the biblical message, but Christians should take the initiative to use all available occasions to communicate the message of the Lord.

If all Christians had become disciples of Christ, equipped to communicate the gospel to individuals and to small groups, the people of Kerala could have been reached already, and thereby could have impacted not only India, but the world.

Personal evangelism is the ministry of evangelism by a committed Christian to an individual or to small groups. When the importance of personal evangelism is stressed

¹³ Acts 6:1.

to stimulate church growth, it is made clear that the ministry is not to be confined to one person or small groups, but even when God brings one person in our way, we as Christians should be sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit to minister to him by word or deed in order to bring him to salvation and to spiritual growth. This may occur in one encounter or during the course of follow up encounters for further growth, ultimately seeking to make someone perfect in Christ.¹⁴ God can use a personal evangelist to sweep thousands of people into the Kingdom of God in a very short time, as he used Philip in Samaria.¹⁵ In this case, the paradigm of evangelism is more like a fishing net than a single fishing hook. Yet, God also used Philip to hook the Ethiopian Eunuch for the salvation. We must know how to use a simple fishing hook with wisdom in the midst of hostile anti-Christian cultural surroundings as in India. If done wisely, it can spread from one person to a whole city.

Personal evangelism also includes teamwork. Jesus sent His disciples two by two. “Two are better than one because they have good reward for their labor, and if one can chase 1000 enemies, two can chase 10,000.”¹⁶ Still, even one witness can form a majority with God. It is the duty of pastors and leaders to network for the purpose of evangelism.

¹⁴ Colossians 1:27-28.

¹⁵ Acts 8.

¹⁶ Ecclesiastes 4:9; Matthew 18:19-20; Deuteronomy 32:30.

Statement of the Problem

The following list outlines a few reasons for our failure in effective personal evangelism:

1. It seems that not many believers or ministers are doing evangelism effectively because many indicate they have not shared their faith in the Lord Jesus to someone recently. They need to be equipped and motivated for mission.
2. The first person to deal with the chain of change is the minister because he or she sets a pace that either prevents or encourages growth. Such books as *Leaders, Strategies for Taking Change*, by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, describe how visionary leadership operates. These authors say, "The Leader may generate new views of the future and may be a genius at synthesizing and articulating these new views of the future, but this makes a difference only when the vision has been successfully communicated throughout the organization and effectively institutionalized as a guiding principle."¹⁷
3. We are not learning from other models of successful standards utilized by nearby and distant churches.
4. One's flexibility has everything to do with evangelistic success - change in the changeable, but not on the eternal. Christians must have personal evangelistic convictions and presumptions based on the Bible.

¹⁷ George, *How to Break Growth Barriers*, 43.

Main Researchable Question

Can 21st century churches in Kerala, India grow effectively and quantitatively for the glory of God by implementing principles and power of personal and small group evangelism within the cultural milieu?

Research Questions

1. It is believed that Apostle Thomas, one of Jesus' twelve disciples, began the work in Kerala, India. What might have been the messages and teachings that he had brought? What can be learned from his life and character through Scripture and history?
2. Why and how did the church lose its brightness and fervency during the past centuries? What can be learned from Kerala church history?
3. What are the contributions of our forefathers and leaders of the 19th and 20th centuries, such as Robert F. Cook, Mary Chapman, John H. Burges, A.C Samuel, K.E Abraham, K.M Panicker, T.M. Varghese, C. Kunjummen, Rev. Ernest Sorbo, P.D. Thomas, P.J. Thomas, P.J. Daniel, Dr. Abraham Philip, P.D. Johnson, P.O. Cherian, Dr. George Shastri, Dr. Habel G. Varghese, T.M. Abraham (Nagpur), P.M. Philip, Thomas Mathew (Udaipur). How can we learn from and imitate them? How can their lives, their struggles, and their sacrifices inspire us?
4. What is the role of personal and small group evangelism in addressing the present stagnation of the Kerala church? What models can be gleaned from

the Apostle and past leaders of the church that might stimulate the present church growth?

5. What can we learn from present leadership, such as T.S. Abraham, K.C John, P.S. Rajamony, D. Mohan, T.G. Koshy, M. Kunjappu, P.S. Philip, T. J Samuel, Dr. A.C George, T.C. George, K.V. Paul Pillai, P.G. Varghese, T.P. Varghese, Isaac V. Mathew, K.J. Mathew, L. Sam, Alexander Philip and others?

Goals from Researchable Questions

Research Question 1

Some say the story of Apostle Thomas coming to India is a Roman Catholic invention.¹⁸ Dr. Habel G. Varghese in his thesis, “The Contemporary Christian Approach to Hindus” tries to prove from ancient records that it is not unreasonable to believe that St. Thomas came to Kerala, India.¹⁹

If Thomas brought the message of the New Testament to Kerala, how might he have communicated the gospel to the Keralites? In Scripture, only John provides any insight about Thomas, beyond the apostolic lists that appear in the Synoptics. The Synoptic writers mention his name, but provide no details about his life.²⁰

¹⁸ K. V. Paul Pillai, *India's Search for the Unknown Christ* (New Delhi: Grace Publication, 1979), 170.

¹⁹ Habel G. Varghese, “Contemporary approach to Hinduism” (Thesis submitted to faculty of the graduate school Wheaton, for M. Div degree Illinois. In August 1971.) These arguments will be explored further in the literature review chapter.

²⁰ Matthew 10:2-4, Mark 3:13-19, Luke 6:12-16.

In John 11:16-57, Thomas appeared as one with a limited spiritual knowledge of Jesus, and his fear of death is also expressed. When Jesus invited his disciples to go to Bethany in Judea after Lazarus' death and resurrection, they did not understand him as the most courageous person the world has ever seen. They were afraid of Jews who had tried to kill him earlier. Thomas's response was that he "said to his fellow disciple, let us also go, that we may die with Him."²¹ There are different types of invitations of Jesus to us in different occasions for our faith to grow.

In John 14:5-7, Jesus explained he was going to prepare a place for them and said they knew where he was going. Thomas expressed his ignorance to these facts, and the famous reply came not to him alone, but to everyone, when Jesus answered, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me you will have known my Father also and now as you know Him and seen Him also"²²

In a similar passage, John 20:24-29, when Thomas doubted the resurrection of Jesus from the testimonies of other disciples who saw Him alive, Jesus appeared to Him after eight days, clearing his doubts as he told His brethren, and proved to him, that Jesus is alive. Jesus said to him, "Thomas because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."²³

²¹ John 11:16.

²² John 14:7.

²³ John 20:29.

In John chapter 21, when the majority of his disciples doubted and went back to fishing, Jesus appeared to them a third time and restored them to his love and fellowship. Thomas was among them.

Finally, in Acts 1 and 2, Luke records that about 120 disciples were praying in the upper room for the Pentecostal event. Thomas was with them and endued with the Holy Spirit. He was among the twelve when Peter preached the Pentecostal message (Acts 2:14).²⁴ He was ready with the power of Pentecostal experience to go into the uttermost parts of the earth.

Research Question 2

Why and how did the church lose its brightness and fervency during the past centuries? What do we learn from Kerala and Indian church history?

Research Question 3

What are the contributions of our forefathers and leaders to our generation that we can use and replicate? How would their biographies, struggles and sacrifices inspire us?

Research Question 4

What can we do in this age to cover up all stagnation?

²⁴ Acts 2:14.

Research Question 5

What can we learn from the present leadership?

Definitions

The following definitions are necessary in order to understand these terms more clearly and precisely:

Evangelism

According to the *American Heritage Dictionary*, evangelism is “Zealous preaching and dissemination of the gospel, as through missionary work.”²⁵ The word “evangelism” comes from the Greek “euangelion.” In simple terms, evangelism is to announce the “evangel,” which means the good news.

A definition of evangelism, first formulated in England in 1919 by the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Committee, accepted as a comprehensive definition of evangelism by many evangelical leaders today states, “Evangelism is to present the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit that men shall come to put their trust in God through Jesus Christ, accept Him as their savior and serve Him as their Lord in the fellowship of His Church.”²⁶ Dr. Billy Graham confirms this by saying, “Biblically, evangelism can mean nothing other than proclaiming Jesus Christ by presence, and trusting the Holy Spirit to use the

²⁵ *American Heritage Dictionary*, (Electronic Edition), “evangelism,” 1994.

²⁶ William Temple’s definitions restated by John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, (Bombay: ELS, 1975), 39.

scriptures to persuade men to become disciples and responsible members of this church.”²⁷

Lewis Drummond defines Evangelism as “a concerted effort to confront the unbeliever with the truth about and claims of Jesus Christ and challenge him with the view of leading him into repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and, thus, into the fellowshiping of the church”²⁸

Church Growth

The North American Society for Church growth wrote its constitution in 1955, and included a lengthy definition of Church growth:

“Church Growth is that discipline which investigates the nature, expansion planting, multiplication, function, and health of Christian churches as they relate to the effective implementation of God’s commission to make disciples of all people (Matt. 28: 18-20). Students of church growth strive to integrate the eternal theological principles of God’s Word concerning the expansion of the church with the best insights of contemporary social and behavioral sciences, employing as the initial frame work of reference the foundational work done by Donald McGavran.”²⁹

Evangelism and Church growth are closely related to each other.³⁰

²⁷ Billy Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, p. 31. quoted by Prakash Yesudasan, *Fishers of Men*, (Chennai: RZIM Life Focus Society), 21

²⁸ Lewis A. Drummond, *Leading your Church in Evangelism* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1975), 21.

²⁹ C. Peter Wagner, *Strategies for Church Growth: Tools for Effective Mission and Evangelism* (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1987), 114.

³⁰ Wagner, *Strategies for Church Growth*, 114.

Leadership

Joel Barker, a bestselling author on the topic of paradigm shifts, says, “A leader is someone you will follow to a place you wouldn’t go by yourself.”³¹ Thus, a leader is someone who has a follower. No functional definition of leadership will hold good in the absence of followers. To increase one’s effectiveness at influencing a “followership,” a leader needs to maintain balance from both the “dreaming” and the “doing” portions of providing direction.³²

According to Max Depree, former board chairman of an evangelical seminary and chief executive officer of a multimillion-dollar business, “In the art of leadership, the first responsibility of a leader is to define reality.”³³ Leaders cause their followers to know what is important and what is not, whether in church or business, they describe the landscape, articulate the plan of actions, and rally the troops to join in the effort.

About the importance of leadership George Barna, Church expert and statistician, asserts, “Leadership remains one of the glaring needs of the church. People often are willing to follow God’s vision, but too frequently they have no exposure to either vision or true leadership.”³⁴ Another definition by Barna goes like this: “A Christian leader is someone who is called by God to lead and possess virtues character,

³¹ As quoted by George, *How to Break Growth Barriers*, 51.

³² George, *How to Break Growth Barriers*, 51.

³³ Max De Pree, *Leadership is an Art*, (Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1987), 11. See also George Barna, *The Power of Vision: Discover and Apply God’s Plan for Your Life and Ministry*, Rev ed. (Ventura: Baker Books, 2009).

³⁴ John C. Maxwell, ed., *The Maxwell Leadership Bible: New King James Version*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 7.

and effectively motivates, mobilizes resources and directs people toward fulfillment of a jointly embraced vision from God”³⁵

J. Oswald Sanders posited that, “Leadership is influence.”³⁶ According to A.W. Tozer, “History will show that the church has prospered most when blessed with strong leaders and suffered the greatest decline when her leaders are weak and time serving. The sheep rarely go much further than the shepherd.”³⁷

Discipleship

Words such as “convert,” “Christian,” and “believer,” were not commonly used by the early church. The word “disciple,” which is used less frequently to describe a follower of Christ, is used at least 250 times in the New Testament. In his mandate to the church, Christ said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations (ethnic groups).” The word for “make disciples” is “matheteuo” and is the only direct imperative found in Matthew 28:19, because the ultimate goal is “that your fruit should remain.”³⁸ The discipleship process is not complete until a believer is brought to maturity and equipped for the “work of ministry.”³⁹

³⁵ Eddie Gibbs, *Churchnext: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Books, 2000), 114.

³⁶ J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 27.

³⁷ A. W. Tozer, quoted in David Arnold, *Discipleship Manual*, (Lake Mary, Florida: Creation House, 2006), 21.

³⁸ David Arnold, *Discipleship Manual* (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 2006), xvi; John 15:16

³⁹ Jim Buchan, *Apostolic Evangelism* (Mansfield, PA: Kingdom Productions, 2001), 35; Ephesians 4:12.

Prayer

According to the *New Dictionary of Theology*:

Prayer is communication with God in worship. Prayer is possible because the triune God is personal, and has so revealed Himself that men and women, made in his image, may address him by name. Because God is holy, sin breaks the fellowship in which prayer is acceptable to him. God's gracious work of salvation restores and renews that fellowship through Jesus Christ.⁴⁰

It continues:

Prayer is the living breath of Christ's church. By prayer the church resists the assaults of Satan (Mt. 26:41; Eph. 6:13–20); receives fresh gifts of grace (Acts 4:31); seeks deliverance, healing and restoration for the saints (Eph. 6:18; Jas. 5:15; 1 Jn. 5:16); supports the witness of the gospel (Col. 4:3, 4); seeks the return of the Lord (Rev. 22:20); and, above all, worships him of whom, through whom and unto whom are all things.

The practice of prayer, its methods and forms have been considered through the centuries. The church has used the Lord's Prayer, the language of the Psalms and other fixed forms to pray in unison; the "richly indwelling word of Christ" has produced a concert of prayer, formal and free, around the globe and across the years. Forms of prayer may be abused, as in "vain repetition" (Matt 6:7). An opposite danger is formless and wordless prayer that seeks mystical absorption into deity rather than living and personal fellowship with the Father through Jesus Christ. The witness of the Spirit grants inexpressible joy to Christians in prayer, yet prayer does not seek to gain ecstasy for ourselves, but to give joy and glory to God.⁴¹

Prayer is the power which moves the hand which moves the world (D. L. Moody).

Prayer is the power behind all the principles of church growth, and it is known as the

only power which the powerless possess.⁴²

⁴⁰ David F. Wright, Sinclair B. Ferguson, and J. I. Packer, eds., *New Dictionary of Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1988), 526.

⁴¹ Wright, *New Dictionary of Theology*, 257.

⁴² John Stott, *The Spirit the Church and the World: the Message of Acts* (Westmont, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1990) 208.

Expository Biblical Preaching

“Expository preaching is the communication of a biblical concept derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through him to his hearers.”⁴³ Philips Brooks defined preaching as “truth poured through personality.”⁴⁴

Scripture

The *Easton Bible Dictionary* explains Scripture as:

“Invariably in the New Testament denotes that definite collection of sacred books, regarded as given by inspiration of God, which we usually call the Old Testament (2 Tim 3:15, 16; John 20:9; Gal 3:22; 2 Pet 1:20). It was God's purpose thus to perpetuate his revealed will. From time to time he raised up men to commit to writing in an infallible record the revelation he gave. The "Scripture," or collection of sacred writings, was thus enlarged from time to time as God saw necessary. We have now a completed "Scripture," consisting of the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament canon in the time of our Lord was precisely the same as that which we now possess under that name. He placed the seal of his own authority on this collection of writings, as all equally given by inspiration (Matt 5:17; 7:12; 22:40; Luke 16:29, 31).”⁴⁵

⁴³ Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: the Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001) 23.

⁴⁴ Roy H. Short. *Evangelistic Preaching*. (Nashville, Tennessee: General Board of Evangelism, Methodist Church, 1946), 22.

⁴⁵ www.bibleforindia.com, 12/08/2010.

Mission

Mission is the Christian church trying to win others for Christ through a group of selected, trained, and equipped workers called the missionaries or evangelists, etc. Emil Brunner said, “The church exists by mission as fire exists by burning.”⁴⁶ Mission is the church involved with the whole world.

Methodology

This research aims to present personal evangelism as the most effective method to reach unsaved people in Kerala so that they could be won and made the members of the real Church.

It uses library research, participant observations, interviews, questionnaires, and reaching out to different age groups and people who work in various areas. The thesis evaluates data collected through Interviews and questionnaires with 10 church leaders, 50 pastors and evangelists, 50 church members, 50 Bible school trainees, and 50 non-Pentecostal church believers.

A General Demography of Kerala

A knowledge of the general demography of Kerala is important for evangelists to recognize the great need to reach people for Christ in Kerala. The demographic data was obtained from the economic review completed by the State Planning Board of Kerala.

⁴⁶ Emil Brunner, *The Word and the World*, (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1931), 27.

Kerala has carved out a separate niche for itself in development discourse due to its impressive performance over the years in the demographic and social development front. Kerala is widely cited as a unique example of positive demographic transition despite poor economic development.⁴⁷ It is a model for the rest of India in demographic achievements and attracts international attention. Over 100 years, Kerala's population increased over five times from 6 million in 1901 to 32 million in 2001. Among the different states of India, Kerala ranks 12th in terms population, and it has 3.1 percent share of the population in India. The population of Kerala is 31.84 million, of which 15.4 million were males and 16.3 million were females, living in around 6.5 million households. Women constitute 51.4 percent of the total population of the state, such that the women outnumbered men by 900,000.

Over the years, Kerala registered a slower pace of population growth rate than India. However, the growth rate during the last decade worked out to 9.4 percent - the lowest after the formation of the state. At the national level, the growth rate was 21.3 percent. It is appreciable that, despite sluggish economic growth, Kerala had achieved this low growth of population. No wonder, mortality, migration, fertility have played an important role in the dynamics of this low growth of population in Kerala. The decadal growth rate was highest in the Malappuram district (1.59%) and the lowest was recorded in the Pathanamthitta district (0.36%). Malappuram districts achieved a deduction of about 11 points between the two (1981-1991, 1991-2001) decadal growth rates, the highest among the districts of Kerala. Overall, the northern district of Kerala

⁴⁷ Kerala State Planning Board, *Economic Review: 2007* (Thiruvananthapuram: 2007).

follows a higher growth pattern, and southern districts follow the lower population growth rate.⁴⁸

District-wise Population and Growth Rate of Kerala - 2001					
District	Population	Males	Females	Sex-ratio (F/M)	Growth rate (1991-2001)
Thiruvananthapuram	3234356	1569917	1664439	1058	9.8
Kollam	2585208	1249621	1335587	1070	7.3
Pathanamthitta	1234016	589398	644618	1094	3.7
Alappuzha	2109160	1014529	1094631	1079	5.2
Kottayam	1953646	964926	988720	1025	6.8
Idukki	1129221	566682	562539	999	7
Ernakulam	3105798	1538397	1567401	1017	9.1
Thrissur	2974232	1422052	1552180	1092	8.7
Palakkad	2617482	1266985	1350497	1068	9.9
Kozhikode	2879131	1399358	1479773	1058	9.9
Wayanad	780619	391273	389346	1000	17
Malappuram	3625471	1754576	1870895	1063	17.2
Kannur	2408956	1152817	1256139	1090	7.1
Kasargod	1204078	588083	615995	1047	12.3
Kerala	3,18,41,374	1,54,68,614	1,63,72,760	1058	9.4

⁴⁸ Kerala State Planning Board, *Economic Review*: 2007.

In terms of population density, Kerala holds the third position with 819 persons per square kilometer, which is nearly thrice that of the national average. Among the major states, Kerala had the highest density until 1981, and in 1991, West Bengal (903) took the prime position, followed by Bihar with 880 persons per square kilometer. However, the difference between Kerala and West Bengal was only 17 persons in 1991, and it increased to 85 persons in 2001. Among the 14 districts of the state, 6 districts (Kasargod, Kannur, Wayanad, Palakkad, Idukki and Pathanamthitta) had a population density below the state average. The highest density is found in Alappuzha (1489) and the lowest is in Idukki (252) district. The density also played a major role in the accessibility of social facilities such as schools and hospitals, and indirectly contributed to the process of demographic transition.⁴⁹

Density of Population (India & Kerala)		
Year	Density (per sq. km)	
	Kerala	India
1961	435	142
1971	549	177
1981	654	216
1991	749	274
2001	819	324

⁴⁹ Kerala State Planning Board, *Economic Review*: 2007.

Of the total population, urban dwellers account for 8,266,925 persons, which is above one-fourth (26%) of the whole population, and the rural populace constitute 235.7 lakhs (23,5700,000) .⁵⁰ Districts-wise data (census 2001) on population revealed that, Malappuram is the most populous district with 3.63 million, followed by the Thiruvananthapuram district (3.23 million). The Wayand (0.78 million) and Idukki (1.12 million) districts had the lowest populations among the different districts of Kerala.

Gender variation showed that the female population topped in twelve districts, with an exception in two districts, Idukki and Wayanad. In the Idukki district, men outnumber women by 4143, whereas in Waynad, there are only 1927 men more than women. In Malappuram, and Kannur, more than 100,000 women outnumber men.

The proportion of child population (0-14 yrs) to the total population is just 26 percent in Kerala, the lowest among the major states of India. The proportion of people in the working age group (15-59) is 63.4 percent in Kerala, as against 55.6 percent in India. In this regard, the state occupies the second position, the first being Tamil Nadu with 63.7 percent.

Kerala seems to be aging fast, with people who are above 60 years forming 10.5 percent of the total population, the highest among the major states of India. The aged population of the state (+ 60 yrs) was 3.36 million, according to the 2001 census. The highest percentage of elderly is in the Alappuzha district, followed by Ernakulam, Kottayam, and Thrissur. The lowest was recorded in the Kozhikode and Wayanad districts.

⁵⁰ 10 Lakh = 1 Million.

Kerala is also home to an indigenous tribal population constituting 1.14 percent of the total population. Unlike other states, the major portion of the scheduled caste population resides in the mainstream with other people. As compared to the percentage of the Scheduled Cast/Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST) to the total population in India, it is less in Kerala, such that the SC/ST population to the total population of India is 6.23 percent and 8.15 percent, whereas in Kerala, it was 9.81 and 1.14 percent only. The highest distribution of people belonging to scheduled castes is in the Palakkad district (13.85%), followed by Thiruvananthapuram (11.87%), Thrissur (11.34%) and Kollam (10.34%). Nearly half of the SC population of the state is distributed in these four districts. The Scheduled Tribes in Kerala are not only geographically concentrated, but are overwhelmingly rural. The highest concentration of scheduled tribes is seen in the Wayanad district (37.36 %), followed by Idukki (14%) and Palakkad (10.89%), with these three districts together accounting for over 60 percent of STs of the state. The coastal district of Alappuzha has the lowest percentage of tribal population.

Since Kerala is an agricultural state with an agrarian economy, a good percent of its population is confined to agriculture and other agro based industries. An examination into the total workers of the state of Kerala revealed that 32.3% of the total population belonged to the working category (main and marginal workers) and 67.7 percent to non-workers. The distributions of the working population in the state are cultivators (7.2%), agricultural laborers (16%), household industries (3.5%) and others (73.2%) respectively.

The gender ratio in Kerala favors women, and it is the only state in India where this excess has grown consistently during the last 100 years. In addition to having the

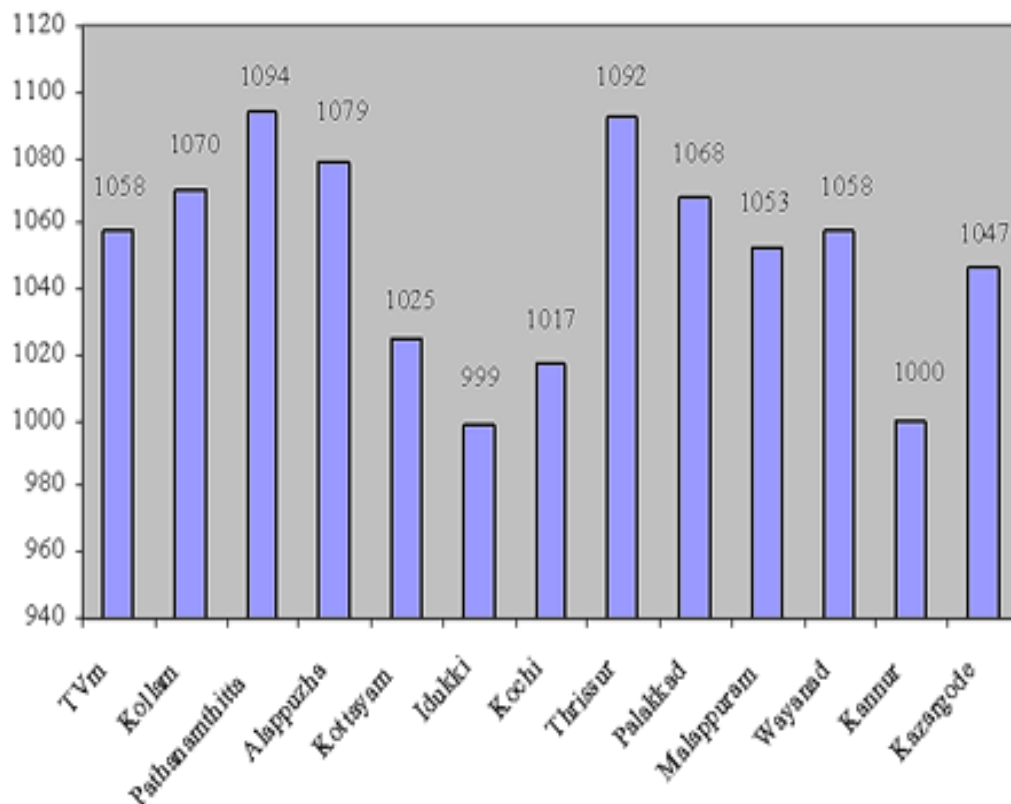
highest gender ratio in the country, 1,058 females for every 1,000 males, the women also outlive men. The reasons for this include better health, a higher literacy rate, and a better standard of living when compared to other states of India.

Sex Ratio: India and Kerala (1901 to 2001)		
Year	India	Kerala
1901	972	1004
1911	964	1008
1921	955	1011
1931	945	1027
1951	946	1028
1961	941	1022
1971	930	1016
1981	934	1032
1991	927	1036
2001	933	1058

Nonetheless, the gender ratio in the state has steadily increased from 1004 in 1901 to 1058 in 2001. This is in sharp contrast to India's 933 females per 1000 males in 2001. Further, the overall gender ratio favors females in every district in Kerala, except Idukki (999) and Wayanad (1000). The Idukki district had a larger male populace, and in

Wayand, the female-male ratio is the same. The highest gender ratio appears in the Pathanamthitta district with 1094 females per 1000 males.⁵¹

District-Wide Gender Ratio in Kerala⁵²



In the last century, Kerala underwent a dramatic demographic transition, and it has been inching towards a zero population growth. The family planning program, which the country took up in 1952, has been a roaring success in the state. In addition, the high literacy rate and sharp fall in the infant mortality rate, brought about by improvement in public health standards, helped people to restrict family size with a

⁵¹ Census of India, 2001.

⁵² Ratio of females per 1000 males.

view to impart children with a better education, ensuring they could lead better lives in the future.⁵³

Demography of the Assemblies of God Churches in Kerala

The Assemblies of God churches in Kerala exist in 14 revenue districts of Kerala, including Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha, Kottayam, Idukki, Ernakulam (Kochi), Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhicodu, Wayanadu, Kannur and Kasargode. According to the information provided by the Assemblies of God Malayalam District Council office, Punalur, the total approximate number of the believers of the Assemblies of God churches and ministers are as follows:⁵⁴

Total Number of Churches	1100
Total number of ministers:	
1. Ordained pastors	700
2. Licensed to preach	250
3. Christian workers certificate	150

⁵³ http://india.gov.in/knowindia/demography_kerala.php

⁵⁴ This was identified from the written requests of them filed to the AG Office, Kerala, in the year 2008.

Total numbers of the believers based on each Revenue District	
Thiruvananthapuram District	10,000
Kollam District	7,000
Pathanamthitta District	4,000
Alappuzha District	2,000
Kottayam District	6,000
Idukki District	3,000
Ernakulam District	3,000
Thrissur District	3,000
Palakkad District	3,000
Malappuram District	2,000
Kozhicodu District	3,000
Wayanadu District	4,000
Kannur District	3,000
Kasargode District	2,000
Total number of the believers	55,000
Membership Average	1:50

Membership can grow significantly if all the believers become disciples who win souls. Pastors have to receive a vision for this in order to offer evangelism training. The researcher has been working in the Thiruvananthapuram area, promoting this work for many years. As a result, evangelism expansion is seen there among his co-workers.

This may make us aware of the strength of the Lord, who can empower Christians to fulfill the great commission of the Lord, showing that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above anything we ask or think according to the power which works in us.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The Bible provides several foundations and frameworks regarding the importance and the power of personal evangelism. These biblical frameworks ought to convict Christians to be courageous to use every available opportunity for evangelism. A false theological view of evangelism leads only to flawed results of an unaccomplished fulfillment of the Great Commission of Lord Jesus Christ.

The Church is responsible for evangelism because the Church is to affect the heavenly and the earthly with the manifold wisdom of God. God has graciously effectual working of his power to preach to all people the unsearchable riches of Christ, allowing all people to see “what the fellowship of the mystery is, which from the beginning of the world has been hidden in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”¹

Only Church members who have become surrendered and commissioned Christians and evangelists will fulfill the Great Commission. This kind of Church has its roots and foundation in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament, they are called the Israel of God.² This Church is the body of Christ;³ it is not the body of the people. As in the body of Christ, the headship, or leadership, of the Church is Christ, even so in

¹ Ephesians 3:8-11

² Galatians 6:16

³ Ephesians 1:23

evangelism, Christ is the lead Evangelist. One has to derive plans, patterns, programs, principles, priorities, and provisions from him, and not from anywhere else. Evangelistic methods can be creative and innovative by the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Personal evangelism has a Church-based theology. Jeff Reed, in his paper “Church-Based Theology: Creating a New Paradigm,” mentions that, “A careful, disciplined Biblical theology approach,” would help churches in the non-western world to do fresh relevant theology in culture.⁴ It will enhance Church growth, using opportunities for evangelism.

Dr. Walter Kaiser presents a clear methodology for a biblical theology approach. He states, “Biblical theology must choose primarily a longitudinal approach that pays attention to the Chronological sequence of the book and the Message ... Biblical Theology has had from its inception the basic mission of sharing the historical progressiveness of revelation in the Bible.”⁵

Taking the biblical theology approach, and adapting Kaiser’s historical progressiveness of revelation, one can arrive at seven chronological periods of the Old Testament. Under this method, the subject of biblical evangelism can be studied throughout the Old Testament in each of its historical contexts. These Old Testament periods are:

⁴ Jeff Reed “Church Based Theology: Creating a New Paradigm” in his talk and paper presentation on 21st October, 2009 at Nagpur, India.

⁵ Walter C. Kaiser Jr., “The Theology of the Old Testament,” *The Expositors Bible Commentary* Vol I. (Michigan: Zondervan Corporation 1979), 287-288.

1. Pre-Patriarchal Period
2. Patriarchal Period
3. Mosaic Period
4. Pre-Monarchial Period
5. Monarchial Period
6. Wisdom Period
7. Divided Kingdom Period and In Exile and Return to Jerusalem Period

In addition, there are two New Testament periods of evangelism:

1. Jesus' Period of Evangelism
2. Early Church Period of Evangelism.

A brief narration of the Old Testament shows that Jesus Christ came to us through the genealogical lines of Adam, Abraham, and David.⁶ He was the man, the message, and the method of evangelism. The Old and New Testaments show how God dealt with man in each of the stages from man's creation throughout the history.

Right from the beginning, even before man's creation, God was the Lead Evangelist. He purposed to share all he had with man, and this is a pattern of personal evangelism – sharing what Christians have as God shared with man all he had.

The Bible presents God as the Ultimate Evangelist, the one who created and recreates the world, and especially human beings in his own image and likeness to have

⁶ Matthew 1:1, Luke 3:22-38.

dominion over all creatures.⁷ God had a plan and purpose for everything that he created.

Genesis 1:26 records, “And God said, Let us make man in our image.” God shared with man his personal being, his own nature. This was good news that God would share himself with man. After sharing his own nature with man, God then gave to man all that he had created. Later, in the beautiful garden of Eden, God came down and walked hand in hand with Adma, and just as a father would talk with his son, they talked with one another. There was perfect understanding between them.

One amazing reality is that the sharing love of God did not stop with Adam. When man sinned, God was sad, but his attitude did not change. He came down again and shared with man the good news of a coming Savior.

The Greatest Evangelist and the Messiah as the Seed of Woman

Genesis 3:15 states, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” This, the first announcement of the good news, is talking about God’s son, Jesus Christ. Although the serpent Satan crushed Adam when he tempted Adam to sin, Satan would be crushed when he sent his son, Jesus Christ.

⁷ Genesis 1:1-3, 26-27.

In addition, this text may be the first suggestion of Christ's suffering, when God said that the serpent would bruise the heel of the seed. "He was wounded and broken for our sins, bruised for our iniquities and by his stripes we are healed."⁸

Abel's Offering and the Prediction of Christ's Atoning Death for Human Sin

Even after Adam and Eve fell into sin, God graciously provided for their salvation. He slaughtered a lamb and made tunics of skin to clothe them. They might have informed their children, Cain and Abel, about how to approach God in worship to please him. A biblical evangelist is to proclaim this good news that was given to our first parents Adam and Eve. It was fulfilled through Jesus Christ the Messiah. He expresses the love of God in sharing good news to others.

Genesis 4:3-5 says,

And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

Abel became a true worshipper, and although he was killed by his brother Cain, his blood still speaks to us. When God enquired about Abel, Cain replied back, saying that he didn't know and asked if he was his brother's keeper.⁹

Only true worshippers are the keepers of their brethren in an evangelistic spirit.¹⁰ As Abel was a pleasing worshiper of the Lord, so only true worshippers in Spirit

⁸ Isaiah 53:5

⁹ Genesis 4:9

¹⁰ Ezekiel 3:17-21, 33

and in Truth have a heartfelt burden for souls, and they will have the consciousness of evangelism as keepers of their brethren.

Noah's Ark as a Type of Christ and the Church

In Genesis 6 through 8, Noah is presented as the only man of his time who was an evangelist, called as a preacher of righteousness.¹¹ When God wanted to wipe out the entire creation due to sin and wickedness, Noah found favor in the eyes of God as a righteous, blameless man who walked with Him.¹²

All evangelists should possess his character. Noah believed that the great flood would come as God had stated. So, the ark was prepared and the proclamation of salvation became evident to all. Only if the evangelist believes there is a future destruction can they give warning to people about that coming judgment of God. The ark was prepared, and the proclamation of salvation from the flood continued as he saved his family from destruction. The ark is a type of Christ and the Church, such that anyone who receives Christ will be saved from eternal destruction to have fellowship within the Church.

The Call of Abraham to Be a Blessing for All Nations

Genesis 11:24-25:11 and Acts 7:1-17 describe the life of Abraham, who is considered to be the Patriarch of Jews and Christians. When Abraham obeyed God to

¹¹ 2 Peter 2:5

¹² Genesis 6:8-9

leave his father's house, his family, and his country, to go to a land God told him, God blessed him with a promise that through his family all the families of the earth would be blessed.¹³ This promise was fulfilled when the Savior of the world came to the earth and brought salvation to all who believe in Him.¹⁴

When God called Abraham to depart to an unknown land, he went the distance. When God commanded Abraham to circumcise the males of his household, Abraham obeyed the Lord "that very same day."¹⁵ Because of Abraham's obedient faithfulness, God did not hide what he did from Abraham. Genesis 18:17-19 states,

The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."

Lot, Abraham's nephew, became a lover of the world and went to Sodom, which was to be destroyed soon. Abraham had compassion for, and mediated on behalf of, Sodom and Gomorrah, paralleling a heart for God's glory in averting judgment, a primary motivation for personal evangelism.

When God asked Abraham to take his beloved son, Isaac, to Mt. Moriah to be sacrificed, he followed through to the last detail. Only a last-second angelic intervention spared the young man's life.¹⁶ No wonder God, the Ultimate Evangelist, called Abraham

¹³ Genesis 12: 1-3

¹⁴ John 3:16

¹⁵ Genesis 17:23

¹⁶ Genesis 22:1-19

“my friend.”¹⁷ That event was a picture of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Personal evangelists are friend-makers with and for God, as Abraham became a friend of God, the source of his deepest love for people and for God.

Melchizedek, A Kingly Priest as a Type of Christ

Melchizedek, the King and Priest of the most High God, acts as an evangelist by blessing Abraham in the name of the God who created heaven and earth.¹⁸ All who share the evangelistic message of Jesus Christ are givers of blessing to people.

Evangelists are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people belonging to God, who are to show the praises of him who called them out of darkness to his marvelous light.¹⁹

Moses of the Mosaic Period

Moses was the key evangelist during his time, bringing the oracles of God to the people. Moses was selfless, meek, and humbler than anyone else on the face of the earth.²⁰ God testified that Moses was his faithful servant entrusted with his entire

¹⁷ Isaiah 41:8, James 2:23

¹⁸ Genesis 14:18-20, Psalm 110:4, Hebrews 7

¹⁹ 1 Peter 2:9.

²⁰ Numbers 12:3

house.²¹ He was a prophet who spoke to God face to face.²² He was such a great man of God that the Jews of Jesus' time claimed that they were Moses' disciples.²³

The institution of the Passover feast,²⁴ the annual day of atonement,²⁵ the bronze snake,²⁶ the star,²⁷ Jesus Christ a prophet like Moses,²⁸ are based in the Pentateuch of Moses. These are some of the many specific predictions of the Christ. Jesus Christ himself said that everything Moses had said was fulfilled in Him.²⁹

It was Moses who expressed the desire that all God's people should be prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon everyone so that all the people of God would become evangelists to spread the good news to the land.³⁰ All evangelists ultimately speak for God to the people, and all prophets speak to the people for their spiritual rebirth, edification, exhortation, and comfort.³¹ Nothing happens until the people of God talk. Evangelists are a kind of prophet too. To accomplish this, people should be:

²¹ Hebrews 3:2

²² Deuteronomy 34:11

²³ John 9:28

²⁴ Exodus 12

²⁵ Leviticus 16

²⁶ Numbers 21:6-9

²⁷ Numbers 24:17,19; Genesis 49:10

²⁸ Deuteronomy 18:15-19

²⁹ Luke 24:27,44

³⁰ Numbers 11:29

³¹ 1 Corinthians 14:3.

- a. Selected³²
- b. Empowered³³
- c. Equipped³⁴
- d. Mentored³⁵
- e. Overseen to help them in difficult situations³⁶

Jesus did all these to his disciples in mentoring them in order to make them effective for his kingdom.

Joshua, the Evangelistic Leader in the Pre-Monarchial Period

Joshua was one of the true evangelistic leaders in the Pre-Monarchial period. Being mentored and equipped under the leadership of Moses, Joshua evolved to become a great leader to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land. He led the Israelites to great victories and distributed the land as tribal possessions. It was to him that the Lord said that there remained a great deal of land to be possessed.³⁷ He challenged the people to serve the Lord as he and his family had done.³⁸ Today, from a New Testament perspective, serving the Lord means to stand for the furtherance of the gospel.³⁹

³² Exodus 18:21a.

³³ Exodus 18:21b.

³⁴ Exodus 18:20a.

³⁵ Exodus 18:20b.

³⁶ Exodus 18:22.

³⁷ Joshua 13:1.

³⁸ Joshua 24:15.

³⁹ Philippians 2:22 (NASB).

During the time of the Judges, God raised different leaders to lead his people from time to time to deliver them from their enemies. Deborah was one such judge chosen by God.⁴⁰ This suggests that women can also be used in the hands of God for His glory.

Monarchial Period

David was a leader after God's own heart and God testified about him, as someone who would do all his will.⁴¹ His name stands forever through Christ the Savior who came as a human descendant in his line.⁴²

From the Psalms of David, we see many predictions and foreshadowing of the eternal King, Jesus Christ.

He Is the Lord's Anointed: Psalms 2

"I have set my King on my holy hill of Zion." (v.6)

"You are my Son." (v.7)

"I will give you the nations for your inheritance." (v.8)

"Kiss the Son..... Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him." (v.12)

⁴⁰ Judges 4:4-5:31.

⁴¹ Acts 13:22, 1 Samuel 16.

⁴² Matthew 1:1.

This evidently means that the eternal King was to rise in David's family. This is a positive statement as to his deity, his universal reign, and the blessedness of those who trust him.

About His Resurrection: Psalms 16

"For you will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will you allow Your Holy One to see corruption." (v.10)

On the day of Pentecost, Peter quoted this verse to prove Jesus resurrected according to the plan and purpose of God.⁴³

A Fore-Picture of the Crucifixion: Psalms 22

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (v.1)

All those who see me ridicule me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, "He trusted in the LORD, let him rescue him; Let him deliver him, since He delights in him!" (v.7, 8)

Jesus' dying words and the sneers of His enemies were foretold.⁴⁴

"They pierced my hands and my feet." (v.16)

The crucifixion as the manner of His death was mentioned here.⁴⁵

"They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." (v.18)

⁴³ Acts 2:27,31

⁴⁴ Matthew 27:46

⁴⁵ John 20:20,25

The soldiers dividing His garments among them and casting lots for its possession was foretold.⁴⁶

To Be Betrayed by Friend: Psalms 41

“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.” (v.9)

Though David said this about his own friend Ahithopel,⁴⁷ Jesus quoted it as a foreshadowing of His betrayal by Judas.⁴⁸

The Glorious Reign of God’s Anointed: Psalms 45 and Psalms 72

“In Your majesty ride prosperously.” (v.4)

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.” (v.6)

“God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.” (v.7)

“I will make Your name to be remembered in all generations; Therefore the people shall praise You forever and ever.” (v.17)

It is the name of Jesus that is glorified as the King of Kings.

⁴⁶ Matthew 27:35

⁴⁷ 2 Samuel 15:12

⁴⁸ John 13:18-27; Luke 22:47-48

The Gall and Vinegar in Messiah's Sufferings: Psalms 69

"They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." (v.21)

Jesus' suffering was foretold in a clear way.⁴⁹

His Method of Teaching in Parables: Psalms 78

"I will open my mouth in a parable." (v.2)

Jesus used story-telling and illustrations as a method to convince the truth to the people who came to listen to his teaching.⁵⁰

God's Faithfulness Magnified: Psalms 89

"I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David:
'Your seed I will establish forever, And build up your throne to all generations.'" (v.3, 4)

Also I will make him my firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth.

My mercy I will keep for him forever, And My covenant shall stand firm with him. (v. 27, 28)"Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David:

His seed shall endure forever, And his throne as the sun before Me;

It shall be established forever like the moon, Even like the faithful witness in the sky."
(v.35 – 37)

⁴⁹ Matthew 27:34, 48

⁵⁰ Matthew 13:34-35

God's oath, repeated over and over, that David's throne will be forever under God's first born is about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Messiah's Rejection by Rulers: Psalms 118

"The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone."

(v.22)

This was quoted by Jesus himself.⁵¹

After the time of Solomon, the Kingdom of United Israel became divided into two – the Northern Kingdom of Israel of 10 tribes and the Southern Kingdom of Judah of 2 tribes.⁵² There were both good and bad kings and queens during this time. God intervened through mighty prophets like Elijah, Elisha etc., as members or spokesperson of God to those kings. During the time of these prophets, the concept of the School of Prophets and training was there.⁵³

God raised up major prophets such as Isaiah and Jeremiah who prophesied not only to Jewish nation but also to other gentile countries like Babel, Moab, Damascus, Ethiopia, Egypt, Edom, Philistine etc.

⁵¹ Matthew 21:42-43

⁵² 1 Kings 12

⁵³ 2 Kings: 2, 6.

Significant Passages about the Messiah, the greatest Evangelist from the Prophets

A Magnificent Vision of the Messianic Age⁵⁴

Isaiah is known as the evangelistic prophet of the Old Testament. The prophetic book of Isaiah is the preeminent book of Messianic Prophecy in the Old Testament. His expressions are ecstatic about the glories of the reign of the coming of the Messiah, who is the greatest Evangelist of today.

Jesus Christ, the Branch of the Lord⁵⁵

Isaiah prophesied about Jesus Christ, the Branch of the Lord and the reign of the Branch and of universal peace in the world.⁵⁶ In Jeremiah, He is called a righteous branch, a King and the Lord of our Righteousness.⁵⁷ Today, anyone can have peace by receiving Jesus Christ. Salvation is personal, present, and perfect peace with Jesus.

Jesus is the Immanuel and the Wonderful Child

“Then he said, “Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Isaiah 2:2-4

⁵⁵ Isaiah 4:2, 5-6

⁵⁶ Isaiah 11:1-10

⁵⁷ Jeremiah 23:5,6

⁵⁸ Isaiah 7:13-14

“Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, as when at first He lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward more heavily oppressed her, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.”⁵⁹

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end,
Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,
To order it and establish it with judgment and justice
From that time forward, even forever.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.⁶⁰

The fulfillment of this prophecy came true when Jesus Christ was born.⁶¹

A Forecast of Messiah's Resurrection

A forecast of both the resurrection of Jesus on Mount Zion and general resurrection of the believers is foretold.⁶²

⁵⁹ Isaiah 9:1-2

⁶⁰ Isaiah 9:6-7.

⁶¹ Matthew 1:21-22

⁶² Isaiah 25:6-9; 26:1,19

Messiah's Ministry of Miracles

Jesus' ministry of miracles and holiness, happiness, singing and joy are foretold.⁶³

The prophet was able to proclaim that there will no longer be sorrows or tears forever by the coming of Messiah.

Messiah like a Shepherd

Jesus Christ's tenderness or gentleness like a shepherd towards His weak flock was prophetically foretold.⁶⁴ His glory and power of His creation was also mentioned.⁶⁵

It is upon this Messiah that we should wait upon to renew our strength.

Israel's coming King

Isaiah foretold the coming King of Israel and that He would rule over Gentiles too, and they would cover the whole earth with songs, praises and joy.⁶⁶

Suffering Messiah⁶⁷

The Suffering Messiah was the most conspicuous feature in the prophecies about the coming King and his suffering. John the Baptist pointed to Jesus as the Lamb

⁶³ Isaiah 35:5-6

⁶⁴ Isaiah 45:10-11

⁶⁵ Isaiah 40:12-31

⁶⁶ Isaiah 42:1-11

⁶⁷ Isaiah 53

of God who takes away the sins of the world.⁶⁸ Later, Philip the evangelist explained from this passage to the Ethiopian Eunuch and led him to Christ.⁶⁹ The suffering King fills the earth with songs of joy.⁷⁰

A New Name for God's People⁷¹

It is a great privilege to be called as Christians.⁷² Minor Prophets such as Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah and Zechariah spoke only to Israel or Jews or to the appointed nations. Jonah was a missionary prophet to Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria. These men of God were unworthy or incapable when God called them. God encouraged them through his word and they took up the responsibility. We have been given great lessons of obedience and disobedience from all these prophets and from the people they confronted with God's message.

The researcher is convicted that a personal evangelist must know Jesus Christ who is the master evangelist. For this, he must have knowledge of how Jesus fulfills the Old Testament, resulting in biblical knowledge flowing through and from the heart. The researcher connects this theology with the theology of personal evangelism. To the

⁶⁸ John 1:29,35

⁶⁹ Acts 8:26-39

⁷⁰ Isaiah 54:1,14; 55:8-13

⁷¹ Isaiah 62:2; 65:15

⁷² Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16

disciples who went to Emmaus, beginning with Moses and all the prophets, Jesus expounded them all the scripture the things concerning himself (Luke 24:27,44,45).⁷³

Significant Passages from the Minor Prophets

Hosea

In his prophecy, Hosea included the gentiles who were once not the people of God, were now called the 'Sons of the Living God'.⁷⁴ A part of Messiah's childhood would be spent in Egypt was foretold by Hosea.⁷⁵

Joel

A period of world evangelization under the leadership of the Holy Spirit was foretold by Prophet Joel and it began on the day of Pentecost.⁷⁶

Amos

Amos foretells that David's fallen throne or Israel will be restored in the person of Christ. However, his rule will not be limited to Israel alone, and will include all the gentiles as well.⁷⁷

⁷³ Luke 24:27, 44-45.

⁷⁴ Hosea 1:10; Romans 9:25,26

⁷⁵ Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:15

⁷⁶ Joel 2:28,32; 3:13-14; Acts 2:16-21

⁷⁷ Amos 9:11-14; Acts 15:12-21

Obadiah

Obadiah has only one chapter, but it ends with the statement that the “Kingdom shall be the Lord’s.”⁷⁸

Jonah

Jonah serves as a sign to Nineveh. He was inside the fish for three days and three nights. Jesus took this to be a foreshadowing of His own death and resurrection, a sign to the world.⁷⁹ Nahum also prophesied against Nineveh.⁸⁰

Micah

Micah prophesied that the birthplace of Jesus would be at Bethlehem.⁸¹ It was those simple shepherds who had the privilege to go to Bethlehem to see Child Jesus, the Savior initially.

Today, all the evangelists have to go to Bethlehem, which means “the House of Bread”, which is the Word of God (Bible), to see God and His purposes for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

⁷⁸ Obadiah 21

⁷⁹ Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:40

⁸⁰ Nahum 1:1

⁸¹ Micah 5:2-5; Luke 2:1-7

Habakkuk

In Habakkuk, the Lord is addressed as the “Rock” and it is the repetition from the song of Moses in Deuteronomy.⁸² It is upon Jesus, the Living Rock, the Church is built.⁸³

Zephaniah

In Zephaniah, “purified lips,” a new language, are offered to God’s people.⁸⁴

Evangelistic speech should always be with grace, seasoned with salt that evangelists may know how they ought to answer every man.⁸⁵ They must walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time. The personal evangelist should defend with wise counsel of God, using the authoritative word of God. He must be able to answer any kind of people with any kind of difficult questions that arises before him. God’s word is sufficient for this.

Significant Passages from the Prophecy of Ezekiel and Daniel

1. Jesus Christ as the Prince of the House of David.⁸⁶

⁸² Habakkuk 1:12; Deuteronomy 32:15,18,20,30, 31

⁸³ Matthew 16:16; 1 Peter 2:4

⁸⁴ Zephaniah 3:9; Hebrews 13:15

⁸⁵ Colossians 4:5,6

⁸⁶ Ezekiel 37:24-25

2. Jesus Christ as the Life-Giving Stream.⁸⁷

3. Daniel's prophecy about the Four Kingdoms.⁸⁸

Nearly 600 years from Daniel to Christ, there were four world empires; Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. They were described in the imagery of Daniel 2. In Daniel 7, the same four empires are described more fully. It was in the days of the Roman Empire that Christ appeared and set up His Church that lasts forever.

Daniel and his friends lived a life-pleasing God and went through trials and tests, but God was with them. They proved their God was alive. Evangelists of today may have to go through difficult situations, but the power of the living God must be manifested in them. The Lord allows testing to know whether we will obey him in all things.⁸⁹

Today's evangelists have to preach this Kingdom in a powerful way, so that powerful people like Nebuchadnezzar should respect them, and come to the revelation that Jesus is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

After a period of seventy years in exile as God told through Jeremiah and Daniel, Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah restored the Jerusalem temple worship in Jerusalem, and rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, respectively.⁹⁰ The study about them and the prophet Haggai, Joshua the son of the high priest, Jehozadak who was with Zerubbabel the governor, inspires us to be in the building of the kingdom of God today.

⁸⁷ Ezekiel 47:1-12

⁸⁸ Daniel 2:1-45; 7:1-28

⁸⁹ 2 Corinthians 2:9

⁹⁰ 2 Chronicles 36:21,22; Daniel 9:1-2

Haggai

In Haggai, Jesus was portrayed as the desire of all nations.⁹¹ Jesus said that if He is lifted up, He will draw all men unto Him.⁹²

Zechariah

Zechariah was the prophet who, along with Haggai and Zerubbabel, inspired the people to rebuild the temple. Zechariah foretold the following about the coming Messiah:

1. The coming of the Lord as the Branch.⁹³
2. The entry to Jerusalem riding on a donkey.⁹⁴
3. The ability of the Lord to remove the sins of the land in a single day.⁹⁵
4. The selling of Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.⁹⁶
5. Jewish people will look to him whom they have pierced.⁹⁷
6. A fountain that is opened to cleanse them from sin and iniquity.⁹⁸

⁹¹ Haggai 2:6,7

⁹² John 12:32

⁹³ Zechariah 3:8

⁹⁴ Zechariah 9:9; John 12:12-15

⁹⁵ Zechariah 3:9

⁹⁶ Zechariah 11:12-13

⁹⁷ Zechariah 12:10; Revelation 1:7

⁹⁸ Zechariah 13:1; 1 John 1:7

All these points can be developed. Its spiritual significance can help the evangelistic message.

Malachi

Malachi was the last canonical prophet of the Old Testament. Malachi gives a forecast of John the Baptist as God's messenger to prepare the way before Jesus Christ.⁹⁹ When Jesus spoke of John the Baptist, he referenced this passage.¹⁰⁰ He offered an amazing promise of God to His children in Malachi 3:12: "And all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a delightful land," says the LORD of hosts.

God desires that his people should rise to this level of promise by evangelizing the world with the good news of Jesus Christ.¹⁰¹ Anybody can praise the Lord after seeing how God kept a faithful remnant, his unending love towards us and to others in the world. This is true for us who are Keralites in India. John the Baptist was alone in the field, proclaiming the message of God. Such boldness is needed for a personal evangelist.

Thus, these Old Testament texts demonstrate the importance of the personal sharing of God's message to the lost. All the narrations point to Jesus Christ, the greatest Evangelist.

⁹⁹ Malachi 3:1; 4:5

¹⁰⁰ Matthew 11:7-14

¹⁰¹ John 3:16

Jesus' Period of Evangelism in the New Testament

John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus the Ultimate Evangelist, who is the perfect God and man, and who grew in wisdom, in stature and in favor with God and men. His grew physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially.¹⁰² He had a unique personality. He came to restore to man everything that was lost due to sin.

Jesus' Conception and Execution of Evangelism

Jesus echoed and confirmed to the people the call of John the Baptist. He began his ministry by preaching, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."¹⁰³ Repentance is what gospel demands, which Jesus still requires for everybody today.

According to John R. W Stott,

We have already seen that it was Peter's first word in answer to the crowd's conscience-stricken question of what they should do was repent. It was his first word again at the conclusion of his second sermon: "Repent therefore" (Acts 3:19). And Paul ended his sermon to the Athenians with the statement that - God commands all man everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30).

To repent was to turn from their sin, and in particular their grievous sin of rejecting Jesus. Their metanoia or change of mind was, then a reversal of their opinion of Jesus and of their rejection in the crucifixion; now they were to believe in him as Lord. Christ and Savior, and express their acceptance in their baptism. For although baptism no doubt means more than this it cannot mean less. They were to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. That is, they were to submit humbly to baptism in the name of the very person they had previously sought to destroy. Nothing could indicate more clearly than this their public and penitent faith in him. Further, their repentance and baptism introduced them into the new community of Jesus. There was no conversion without church membership.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Luke 2:40, 52

¹⁰³ Matthew 4:17

¹⁰⁴ John R. W Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, (Bombay: Gospel Literature Service, 1993), 52-53.

Repentance, conversion, and church membership are linked together. Later in the words of Peter at the house of Cornelius, “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him (Acts 10:38).”

Jesus made it clear to them that they misunderstood him by saying,

Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.¹⁰⁵

Jesus, as the New Covenant Maker, gave a new and deep-rooted interpretation to the Old Testament by offering his own blood for the sins of the mankind. He taught, preached, saved people from their sins, healed all kinds of sickness and raised dead.

Jesus' Selection and Training of His Disciples

Jesus selected and trained the twelve disciples. Robert Coleman, in *The Master Plan For Evangelism*, explains this approach as a multi-step process: Jesus selected them, associated with them, consecrated them, Imparted them and putting them the demonstration, delegated them, supervised them and made them to reproduce fruit for Jesus.¹⁰⁶ R. A. Torrey, in *Personal Work*, substantiates this thought.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Matthew 5:17-19.

¹⁰⁶ Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1980), 1-102.

¹⁰⁷ R.A Torrey, *Personal Work: How to Work for Christ* (Edinburgh: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1991).

Jesus personally called all the twelve disciples:

And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons: Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter; James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, “Sons of Thunder”; Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite; and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.¹⁰⁸

Why did Jesus choose these twelve men? These twelve were those who left everything to follow him whole-heartedly. They were chosen from different backgrounds – from fishermen (Peter, Andrew, James and John)¹⁰⁹ to a tax collector (Matthew)¹¹⁰, from Simon the Zealot to Judas Iscariot, Philip from Bethsaida, Bartholomew who is also known as Nathaniel from Cana.

The call of Jesus for discipleship may seem very tough then and even now. He said,

So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”¹¹¹

Is it not joyful for the Church today to know these secrets that the Children of God can live a sacrificial life for the advancement of the Kingdom?

¹⁰⁸ Mark 3:13-19.

¹⁰⁹ Matthew 4:18-22

¹¹⁰ Matthew 9:9, Luke 5:27-29.

¹¹¹ Matthew 19:28-30.

The Evangelistic Approach of Jesus Christ and the Apostles

The researcher will now survey the New Testament to examine Jesus' dealing with individuals in the Gospels and Paul's encounters with people in Acts and the Epistles. Jesus, who taught large groups, is also an example in personal witnessing. On many occasions, he taught one person or small groups.¹¹² Here is a list of some of the most significant of these one-to-one encounters:

1. A Jewish religious leader, Nicodemus by name, came to the Lord Jesus by night, and the Lord dealt with him personally.¹¹³
2. One noon, He sat on the edge of the well, and a Samaritan woman who had five husbands came to draw water.¹¹⁴ This is a clear example of how Jesus led

¹¹² Matt 8:5 -13 Jesus to the centurion, Matt 8:14 to Mother in law of Peter, 9:9 to Levi the tax collector. Mathew 15:22-28 to the Canaanite women. Matt 16:17 – to Peter about the building the Church, Math 17:27 to Peter about giving tax money, Matt 20:28 - To the mother of John and James. Matt 22:36 to one who asking which is the great commandment. Matt 26:6- about the women who anointed, Mtt 26:50, Calling Iscariot Judah friend. Mark 2:11 to the Pharisee. Mark 5:1- 20 Jesus to the demon possessed in Gadara. Mark 20:25-34 to the women of 12 years of issue of blood, Mark 36 to the Jairus, Mark 9:14 – To the father of the son with evil Spirit. Mk 10:17-29. To the rich man who found eternal life. Mark 10: 55-52 Jesus to the blind Berthimai. Luke 1:31,34 to the unclean spirited man at the synagogue of Capernaum.. Luke 11:17 Jesus to the dead young man to the widowed mother. Luke 7:15 to the sinner women in for given, Luke 12:13-15 to one who come and asking help of Jesus to divide the property with his brother. Luke 13:10 a women of 18 years of infirmity delivered. Luke 16:1 about the unfaithful steward. Luke 16:19 about the rich man and poor Lazarus. Luke 17:11 one of the 10 lepers came back to thank Jesus. Luke 19:1 to the chief of the publicans Zacchaeus. Luke 22:24-33 Jesus interceding for Peter. Luke 24 13 to the disciple who went to Emmaus, John 1:39 Jesus to the enquiring disciples of John "come and see", John 1:42 to Simon in one new name Peter, John 1:43 Jesus to Philip, John 1:48-51 Jesus to Nathaniel, John 3:1 -15 Jesus to Nicodemus, John 4:7-25 Jesus to the Samaritan woman. John 5:1-9 to one at Bethesda pool, John 6:4 Jesus to Philip and Andrew, John 8:1-10 Jesus to the women who has taken adultery. John 9:6 He said to the born blind, John 11:25 Jesus to Martha, John 18:33-37 Jesus to Pilate, John 19:26 Jesus to his mother and to the disciple one who he loved John 20:15 Jesus to the weeping Mary, John 20:26 Jesus to the doubting Thomas, John 21:15 Jesus to the Peter, John 21:23 Jesus to the disciple who lives long.

¹¹³ John 3:1-21.

¹¹⁴ John 4: 1-42.

her step by step to faith in Himself, and how she brought the villagers to hear Him so that they too might believe in Him.

3. Another day He came into a town named Jericho, looked up into a tree, saw Zachaeus, a tax gatherer and said, “Come down, Zachaeus, for today Salvation is come to thy house.”
4. As Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, when He saw the two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. He said to them, “follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”¹¹⁵

If Christ promised this to Peter and his friends, that promise can be for everyone who follows him. Evangelists following the Lord, the master winner of souls, can capture his vision and burden for perishing souls. They will receive the power of the Holy Spirit to witness and minister to various needs of people. Everyone can witness effectively to individuals because Jesus promised He would make them fishers of men. So, Jesus commands everyone to follow Him and promises that when they do, he will make them fishers of men. What he has promised, he will do.

Everyone may not be like Peter, who preached one day and witnessed three thousand added to the church.¹¹⁶ Yet, everyone can be like Andrew, who after he had been brought to the Savior, found his brother Peter, and brought him to Jesus.¹¹⁷ It

¹¹⁵ Matthew 4:19

¹¹⁶ Acts 2: 41

¹¹⁷ John 1: 42

might be said Peter fished with a net and caught large numbers, while Andrew fished with a pole and a line, catching one fish at a time. All Christians may not be called upon to preach to great multitudes or even to groups, yet we can witness effectively to individuals one by one – the pole and line method. Like Andrew, we might lead someone to the Lord, and that one might lead thousands.

According to John 1:40,44, Matt 4: 18-22, Matt 9:9, John 1:42,43,47, these apostles were won through personal interactions with Jesus. Jesus did not command us directly to be fishers of men. However, He commanded us to follow Him, and then He promised, as the result of our response, to make us fishers of men. Responsibility must come from us, and the ability will come from God. We can witness effectively for Christ to other individuals, to our friends, neighbors, and acquaintances because He has promised to make each of us a fisher of men.

Jesus dealt with individuals like Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, influencing them by his teaching so that they in turn could influence others.¹¹⁸ Jesus chose the Twelve, a small group, to train them that they could influence upon the whole world.¹¹⁹ Jesus promised that when two or three gather in his name, He will be there in their midst.¹²⁰ Though He loved the whole world for salvation, He is concerned for each individual to be saved. He asked, “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and loses his own soul?”¹²¹ It is through the sayings of Jesus that we know

¹¹⁸ John 3,4

¹¹⁹ Mark 3:13-14

¹²⁰ Matthew 18:20

¹²¹ Mark 8:36.

the value of one soul is worth more than the whole world. With this outlook, the evangelists should see each individual.

Jesus healed and delivered multitudes, but he also healed individual persons.¹²² He delivered the Gadarene demonic, healed the woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years, and raised the twelve-year-old daughter of Jairus. He had power over demons, disease, and death.¹²³

His interactions with individuals can be seen throughout the Gospels. His disciples also followed similar pattern. Seeing a lame man at the Temple's gate, they didn't wait to move the lame man to be gathered with a crowd to minister to him with everyone else, but showed the power of Jesus to him, with the result that he was healed by faith in the Lord.¹²⁴ Philip the evangelist encountered the Ethiopian eunuch and led him to salvation, and thereby influenced Ethiopia.¹²⁵ God dealt with Saul who was once the persecutor of the church on the road to Damascus, and he became the promoter of Christianity.¹²⁶ God told Ananias to see Paul and pray for him, for his conviction and courage in the Lord.¹²⁷ God used Peter to go to the house of Cornelius, and the group that was gathered there to hear the Good News turned to the Lord and were filled with the Holy Ghost so that the Gentiles could be added to the kingdom of God.¹²⁸

¹²² Luke 5; Mark 2:1-10

¹²³ Mark 5

¹²⁴ Acts 3

¹²⁵ Acts 8: 26 - 39

¹²⁶ Acts 9:3-7

¹²⁷ Acts 9:11-12

¹²⁸ Acts 10:24 - 45

The church must recognize that Matthew 28:18-20 is the Great Commission of Jesus Christ to his followers. It commands followers of Jesus to go into the world, to preach and teach every creature what Jesus has commanded.¹²⁹ Paul and Barnabas went together for the work the Lord had called them to do.¹³⁰ Paul dealt with Elymas, a Jewish Sorcerer, who tried to withhold the faith of the governor of Cyprus, Sergius Paulus.¹³¹ Along with his preaching to the multitudes, Paul encountered a lame man at Lystra and brought forth healing to him.¹³² Small groups of delegation with Paul and Silas brought the decision of the Jerusalem Council to the churches and to comfort them.¹³³

Paul and his small group mission preached the gospel extensively in Europe, hearing in a dream one man's beckoning from Macedonia to go there and help them.¹³⁴ Paul preached to a small group at the riverside at Philippi, and Lydia opened her heart for what became the beginning of the great work at Philippi.¹³⁵ The jailer himself was saved, and then his family after the miraculous escape of Paul and Silas from prison.¹³⁶ Paul, as an individual, preached at Athens, Areopagus, and he met with success, when

¹²⁹ Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:45-49; John 17:18, 20:21; Acts 1:8

¹³⁰ Acts 13:2-3

¹³¹ Acts 13: 6 – 12

¹³² Acts 14:8 - 10

¹³³ Acts 15:40 - 41

¹³⁴ Acts 16:9-10

¹³⁵ Acts 16:14-15

¹³⁶ Acts 16:29-34

Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them joined him and believed.¹³⁷

Other apostles, like John, also mentioned names in their gospels and letters—Gaius, Epaphras, Demetrius, to name a few—which shows the importance of interaction with individuals. Paul had his opportunities to present the Gospel to the king Agrippa, governors, and to the Roman officials. The influence was a group of saints even in Caesar’s palace and this continues throughout church history of the world.

Conclusion

There are strong biblical foundations for personal evangelism. From the very beginning, in Genesis, God began interacting with individuals. God calls individuals and trains them through different situations. In the Pentateuch, we see many individuals who answered the call of God. In the historical books, from Joshua to Esther, there were judges and kings who were called out and appointed by God for certain purposes. In Psalms, as David sang that the Lord was his shepherd, God’s personal touch and interaction are seen and felt in every psalm. The prophetic books explore many occasions that show individual responses to God’s messages. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ, in the midst of multitudes, interacts with individuals such as Zacchaeus. Throughout Scripture, we see foundations for personal dealings by God with individuals.

Yes, God’s sharing love knows no limit. John 3:16 reads,

¹³⁷ Acts 17:34

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

This well-known verse is the heart of God’s own pattern for personal evangelism. His love is a personal love, a giving and sharing love for all people.¹³⁸ Jesus has called his children to be no longer as servants, but as friends.¹³⁹ Thus, it becomes the responsibility of everyone to share his love to all mankind.

The researcher has tried to establish that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the whole Bible, not just a small part of the Bible. No chapter in the Bible contains a neat outline of all the elements of the gospel, but our gospel should be a summary God’s love for a lost world. So, a personal evangelist should saturate himself in his Word, both Old Testament and New Testament. He will communicate from his growing understanding of this infinitely rich message. Personal evangelists must be equipped with the wisdom of God, as Stephen the evangelist was, where no one could withstand against his wisdom (Acts 6:8-10).¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Jean – Baptiste Swadago, *Personal Evangelism* (Brussels, Belgium: ICI, 2001), 10, 11.

¹³⁹ John 15:15, 16.

¹⁴⁰ Acts 6:8-10.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many evangelism methods appear in the New Testament practiced by Jesus and Apostles in the early centuries. Personal evangelism is one method that Christians may trace out from the pages of New Testament as a more relevant model, even for this modern time. This chapter provides a survey of literature relating to the subject, understanding that the importance and the power of personal evangelism is that it stimulates Church growth.

Personal evangelism provides insights regarding Church growth in the Assemblies of God Malayalam District Council of South India. The researcher starts with the uniqueness of the Bible for it is the first and primary literature on this topic. It is the source of our understanding of the principles and practice of evangelism and Church growth. The Bible should be treated as the inspired Word of God and the highest authority by which the topic of personal evangelism is treated.

Definition of Personal Evangelism

Personal evangelism describes what occurs when one individual shares his or her faith with another. The early disciples demonstrated an unquestionable evangelistic heart. Michael Green clearly portrays this evangelistic heart, providing a picture of the evident pattern of those days that “from the moment a person finds the truth about

Jesus they are constrained to pass it on.”¹ He gives a clearer description about the personal witness of the early disciples and considers the descriptions we see in the first chapter of the gospel of John to be “more than the individualism of the author of the Gospel asserting itself,” and to be a “reflection of the importance of personal evangelism in the outreach of the Church.”² He also tried to show a pattern of the early believers coming to Jesus, stating, “It was in this way that many of the most impressive converts were made. Pantaenus... led Clement of Alexandria to Christ. Justin seems to have done the same for Tatian, after himself being won to Christianity through his encounter with the old man in the fields”³

Green continues to explain that the method of personal evangelism proved effective among people with different temperaments, emphasizing the value of humility and obedient trust in God to be able to practice this unique method.⁴

In his article “How to Develop an Evangelistic Life Style,” Terrel Smith brings out Paul’s definition of evangelism. Based on 2 Corinthians 4-6, evangelism is an honest open statement of the truth (4:2) that Jesus is the Lord, (4:5), given in the power of God (4:7), to please Him (5:9), controlled by the love of Christ (5:14), to persuade people (5:11), through love (6:11), to be reconciled to God (5:20). The word

¹ Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, (Great Britain: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd, 1978), 290.

² Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 270.

³ Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 270.

⁴ Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 270.

“evangelize” means to proclaim the gospel or proclaim the gospel or spread the good news.⁵

Smith further states, that there are four things that evangelism is not. First of all, evangelism is not defined by positive results (Acts: 17:30, 31). We may receive many different responses. Second, evangelism is not deceitful (1 Thess. 2:3, 2 Cor. 4:2). Third, evangelism is not distorted. We need to share the truth and nothing but the truth. Finally, he posited that evangelism is not optional. The evangelistic work is not limited to a select few, but to every Christian.⁶

Smith also explained what evangelism is, so that a believer can be useful to God in evangelism: First of all, the believer needs to love God (Matt 22:37, 38; John 14:21). Second, the believer needs to learn to love the people (Matt 22:39; Rom 10:14-17; Acts 4:12; Ez 3:17-18). Third, the evangelists need to be where the people are, and they have to listen to the people. As Jesus was sent from heaven to come to us to rub shoulders with publicans and sinners, they have to go to the people and listen to them to help them. Finally, the believer needs to get his message clear. Evangelists need to know God, and they need to know people – then they need to know how to contextually apply the gospel. Opportunities will appear if you are ready for them.⁷

⁵ Terrel Smith, “How to Develop an Evangelistic Lifestyle”, in Paul E. Little and others, *His Guide to Evangelism*, (Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 1978), 84.

⁶ Smith, 86.

⁷ Smith, 88-90.

Gene Edwards, in *How to Have a Soul Winning Church*, reflects on the method of personal evangelism and considers it to be the “most productive evangelism of all.”⁸ He further states that:

This is a revealing fact to many, but we have consistently seen more people find Christ and come into the church – through crusades in Personal evangelism, than are being won to Christ through any similar campaigns in mass evangelism. Percentage wise, based on the number of Christians actually participating, personal evangelism is always far and away the most fruitful means of evangelism.⁹

He hopes a day will come when personal evangelism will stand on an equal footing with mass evangelism in the number of people and churches participating. According to him, “Should the day ever come, when great hosts of churches unite to evangelize entire cities through house to house witnessing, the church will see the largest in-gathering of souls in Christian History.”¹⁰

According to Robert E. Coleman, “Evangelism announces that Salvation has come.”¹¹ With the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, salvation has come. The angels pronounced “I bring you glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord.”¹² This is the message we proclaim.

⁸ Gene Edwards, *How to Have a Soul Winning Church*, (Springfield Gospel Publishing House, nd), 57.

⁹ Edwards, 57.

¹⁰ Edwards, 57.

¹¹ Robert E. Coleman, “Evangelism” in A. Scott Moreau, ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, (Michigan: Baker Books, 2000), 342.

¹² Luke 2:9.

Importance of Persons

Every person is important, a truth essential to personal evangelism. So, it is very important that every evangelist should understand what is meant by personality.

Personality is “the sum total of those factors of physique and constitution and those enduring, underlying tendencies of a person which determine his characteristic behavior.” This is a common definition of personality, but there are a variety of other meanings. The term is derived from the Latin word *persona* which denotes the masks first used in Greek drama and later adopted by Roman players. The masks, which were adaptations of the basic masks of comedy and tragedy, served to distinguish the role of the player. Although *persona* refers to superficial and external aspects of the individual, personality has tended to refer to central and enduring aspects with increasing frequency.¹³

Psychologist Gordon W. Allport, in summarizing the historical literature, has distinguished fifty different meanings that personality has acquired in philosophy, theology, law, sociology, and psychology:

In philosophy, personality has been used synonymously with selfhood, with the ideal of perfection, and with the supreme value. In theology, the members of the Trinity have been considered as personalities with three forms of appearance, each sharing the same essence. In law, personality or person may refer to anyone enjoying legal status, the living human being in his entirety, or an incorporated group of people.¹⁴

¹³ A.S. Hornby (ed.), *The Advanced Learners' Dictionary*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1996), 724.

¹⁴ William D. Halsey (ed.), *Collier's Encyclopedia with Bibliography and Index*, Vol. 18, (Canada: Crowell-Collier Educational Corporation, 1970), 594.

Since every person is different from everyone else, each one has to be evangelized personally. Norman Geisler describes, “Human beings, like God and angels, are not androids, or automations of human form. They are persons, with intellect (mind), emotion (feeling), will (choice), and conscience (moral capacity). The Bible spells out all of these aspects of human personhood.”¹⁵ The gospel ought to penetrate a person. Thus, it will be done most effectively when people make a personal approach in evangelism.

An evangelist has to speak to an individual’s mind because “human beings were created with self-reflective minds that have the power of syllogistic reasoning.”¹⁶ After hearing the gospel, he or she should receive time to digest the message and do some reflecting on what was heard. In a public address, or mass media evangelism programs, these opportunities may not be present.

The Gospel should touch every human heart, which is the center of emotions: “In addition to rational thinking, human beings are capable of deep emotions and feelings, such as joy and sorrow. Unlike the mythical androids, humans are more than minds and wills – they have heart.”¹⁷ The mind, will, and heart of individuals are more involved voluntarily in every personal discussion than in other methods of evangelism.

The born-again experience is a life of transformation in each person’s will (choice). So, it is better to have personal interaction with individuals than mass media

¹⁵ Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, Vol 3, (Minnesota: Bethany House, 2004), 76.

¹⁶ Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, Vol 3, 76.

¹⁷ Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, Vol 3, 76.

communication because, unlike animals, human beings were created with the moral capacity to know right from wrong and the will to choose one over the other.¹⁸ This responsibility was included in God's command to Adam: "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."¹⁹

Human beings are different from other living creatures in that they have to meet personally in order to evangelize them. "Human beings are unique from all other creatures on earth in that within their very nature they have a God-given moral capacity called conscience. Even in our fallen state, God holds us responsible for avoiding evil."²⁰

Personal evangelism gives more opportunity to interact with the total behavior of the person as the *New Dictionary of Pastoral Studies* explains:

Personality refers to the characteristic pattern of an individual's interaction with the environment. It describes the active integration of all the various aspects of human psychological functioning into a system that gives a discernible, unique shape to a person's life. Personality develops through the interaction of inherited and environmental factors. Nature and nurture, biology and society, maturation and learning all interact to form a personality. Theories of personality vary in the emphasis they place on each of these factors, but all except the most radical recognize some interplay between unfolding of inherent tendencies and response to the environment.²¹

Oral Communication in Personal Evangelism

¹⁸ Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, Vol 3, 76.

¹⁹ Genesis 2:16-17.

²⁰ Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, Vol 3, 76-77.

²¹ Wesley Carr (ed.), *The New Dictionary of Pastoral Studies*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WBE Publishing Company, 2002), 262

Even though modern technologies and media have exponentially increased global communication, direct oral communication is not irrelevant. One missiologist says,

The non-literate population in India has been posing a great challenge for the evangelization of India and especially this is true in many parts of North India. Many of the rural and tribal people are the least literate people in India today. Except for some tribal people in North East India and the Chota Nagpur region, most of the tribal people are still pre-literates. Though the national literacy is much lower than this. It is estimated that only about 30 percent of the people are illiterates in the villages of India. The percentage is lower than 20 among the women in the rural and tribal communities.²²

He continues, “Personal encounter is a basic requirement and oral or verbal communication is the most effective method.”²³

All kinds of communication methods are important in evangelism: Communication is the missionary problem par excellence. The word comes from the Latin word *communis* (common). In order to fulfill the Great commission a ‘commonality’ must be established with the various people of the world – a commonality that makes it possible for them to understand and embrace the gospel of Christ.²⁴

From very early days, the progress of the gospel has been aided by the communication skills of its proponents. Immediately, one thinks of John the Baptist’s preaching in Judea, Peter’s sermon on Pentecost, and Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles. Jesus was a master communicator. However, a tension is introduced at this point because the New Testament makes it clear that human wisdom and communication

²² S.D. Ponraj, “The Power of Oral Communication: The Challenge of Reaching the People of Oral Cultures” in Ezra Sargunam, Ed., *Mission Mandate II*, (Chennai: Mission Educational Books, 2008.), 245.

²³ S.D. Ponraj, “The Power of Oral Communication: The Challenge of Reaching the People of Oral Cultures” in Ezra Sargunam, Ed., *Mission Mandate II*, (Chennai: Mission Educational Books, 2008.), 245.

²⁴ David J. Hesselgrave, “Communication” in A. Scott Moreau, *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, (Michigan: Baker Books, 2000), 215.

skills are not sufficient to draw people to Christ and advance his kingdom.²⁵ Although Jesus commissioned the apostles to disciple the nations by preaching and teaching, he commanded them to stay in Jerusalem until empowered by the Holy Spirit.²⁶

Thus, personal communication combined with the power of Holy Spirit will become more effective, even in this contemporary situation.

Need for Personal Communication Training

Evangelists should be trained for personal communication. S.D. Ponraj states,

I had the opportunity to attend the communication Bridges Seminar conducted by Bihar Out-Reach Network in Patna in 2001. In the seminar, I learned about the methods of communication to non-literates. I felt that I should change my methods if I have to bring people to Christ and not just by the healing ministry. I decided to follow the oral methods in my communication. I also learned the local language and communicated the gospel through singing and storytelling. I decided to train the local new believers who can communicate in the heart language of the people.²⁷

And,

I found amazing results in my ministry when I used the oral communication methods. I saw that the people began to respond to the gospel, and many accepted Christ and took baptism. During the last four years, the Lord enabled us to plant 22 churches and to baptize over 350 believers. Praise God for this breakthrough! I thank the Lord for the opportunity I had to learn the power of the oral communication methods.²⁸

The effectiveness of personal communication can be greatly enhanced by obtaining proper training in how to share the gospel in a contextual basis. By

²⁵ 2 Corinthians 2:1-6.

²⁶ Acts 1:8; David J. Hesselgrave, "Communication" in A. Scott Moreau, *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, (Michigan: Baker Books, 2000) 215.

²⁷ Ponraj, 249.

²⁸ Ponraj, 249.

empathizing with the listener, evangelists are able to connect better with them on a personal basis.

Personal Evangelism and Small Group Evangelism

Many missionaries give importance to personal evangelism as one of the effective methods for evangelism. Gene Edwards states, “If public proclamation of various types and the private use of the home were crucial factors in the spread of the gospel, no less important was personal evangelism, as one individual shared his faith with another.”²⁹ The first chapter of the gospel of John gives the pattern. From the moment each man finds the truth about Jesus, he is constrained to pass it on. It was through the personal witness of John the Baptist that the two disciples found Jesus. No sooner had one of them, Andrew, made the discovery, then he found his brother Simon Peter, and brought him to Jesus. Next, Jesus himself takes the initiative and encounters Philip of Bethsaida; we are not told how. Yet, Philip carries on the good work and finds Nathanael, and he in his turn is brought to confess that Jesus is the Son of God. This is more than the individualism of the author of the Gospel asserting itself. It is a reflection of the importance of personal evangelism in the outreach of the Church.³⁰

The largest churches all over the world are churches that have organized small groups. Church outreach moves along natural networks in any society through interpersonal relationships with family, friends, and colleagues. These natural bridges link people together. Evangelism and Christian nurture occur through these social network groups. Small group churches tend to be more relevant as they take advantage of cultural and social similarities of the group members. The

²⁹ Edwards, 58.

³⁰ John 1: 35-51.

commonality is much higher in small groups than in the large church celebration service; so, specific needs can be met within the groups as the Bible is applied to daily life.³¹

They present a high level of commonality. Members of the small group have unifying characteristic that bring them together. Personal evangelism often involves and utilizes the advantages of network commonality and relevancy that small groups have.

“A small group consists of five to fifteen people meeting together regularly to fulfill the one-another commands of Scripture, while being integrally related to a local church, and having an outward focus on the world with the overarching purpose of glorifying God.”

Siga Arles writes about personal evangelism and small group evangelism,

The mission Mandate involves the call for the church in mission to be involved in the process of sharing the Good News, proclaiming the Gospel or doing evangelism. It is carried out by many means, such as, personal evangelism, pulpit evangelism, literature evangelism, radio evangelism, television evangelism, crusade evangelism, visitation evangelism, internet evangelism, and the new version like friendship evangelism. One hears of many approaches to evangelism: People-group approach, Felt-Need Approach, etc. Trainings for all these abound. As someone said, if all these training and preparatory activities were to have succeeded, we would have had the world evangelized a hundred times over...³²

The various approaches to evangelism highlight the importance and significance of personal and small group evangelism.

Although the church knows the importance of personal evangelism, less has personal evangelism has taken place. Gene Edwards rightly stated,

Personal evangelism is talked about. People write books about it. Men preach fervent messages about the need of it. And in isolated cases, you find a few

³¹ Mikel Neumann, “Small Groups” in A. Scott Moreau, *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, (Michigan: Baker Books, 2000) 882.

³² Siga Arles, “Leadership and Evangelism” in Ezra Sargunam, Ed., *Mission Mandate II*, (Chennai: Mission Educational Books, 2008.), 251.

people who do it. But no great, sweeping return to personal evangelism has come. There has not been a time in the last 1800 years when a great movement of personal witnessing has gripped a large portion of Christian people.³³

If every missionary and evangelist understand the importance of personal evangelism, the dream of world evangelization could become real very soon.

Why the Church Needs Personal Evangelism

The Church needs personal evangelism because the problems of Satan, sin, self and eternal punishment still exist. Although God pronounced everything “very good” after his work of creation, anyone can see that much of what exists today is not good: evil, wickedness, oppression, strife, wars, death, suffering etc. are there. How evil entered the world is a question that has perplexed many thinkers. Yet, the Bible has God’s answer. The Bible is the only book that states what sin really is, and its remedy. History and man’s own consciousness bear abundant testimony to the fact of the reality of sin. Myer Pearlman says, “There are theories which deny, misconceive or minimize the nature of sin. They are Atheism, Determinism, Hedonism, Christian science and evolution.”³⁴

Personal evangelists should know and understand the reality of sin, its consequences, and its remedy. Satan is the author of sin. He is a thief. He comes to steal, kill and to destroy.³⁵ All wrong doing is directed against God because wrong is a

³³ Edwards, 13.

³⁴ Myer Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*, (Springfield: GPH, 1990), 121-123.

³⁵ John 10:10.

violation of right, and right is the law of God. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The wages of sin is death.³⁶ Therefore, man needs a pardon based on a divine provision of atonement. He can receive the gift God, the eternal life through Jesus Christ.³⁷

The teachings of Jesus on hell make evangelism imperative and urges the proclamation of salvation.³⁸ William Crocket brings out four different views about hell. Hell is literal –a view by John F. Walwoord; hell is metaphorical --a view by William Crocket. Hell is purgatorial –a view by Zachias J. Heaiyas. Hell is conditional –a view by Clark H. Pinock.³⁹ This thesis takes the position that Hell is a real and literal place of eternal conscious punishment.

Jesus Christ came to warn about Hell and to make himself an atoning sacrifice to save mankind from eternal punishment. Eternal salvation is achieved only by believing in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. The people of God must realize the seriousness of it and witness Christ the Savior to others. When believers are convicted with this urgent need for the first time, the first people they reach out to will be those closest to them personally. Personal evangelism becomes the primary and most available option.

Today, religious pluralism is the greatest challenge facing Christianity. The belief that Christ is the only way to God is being challenged, and Christianity is increasingly

³⁶ Romans 6:23.

³⁷ Romans 6:23.

³⁸ Matthew 113:40, 50; 25:41, 46.

³⁹ William Crocket ed. *Four Views on Hell*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishers, 1919), cover 4.

seen as just one among many valid paths to God.⁴⁰ Yet, salvation is in Christ alone, and that must be affirmed in personal evangelism. Now, see the declaration of God:

But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no distinction; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no distinction; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth [to be] a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God.⁴¹

Michael Green recounts the power of friendship in evangelism from the earliest history of the church:

There is a charming passage at the beginning of the *Octavius* of Minucius. Felix shows the attractive power of friendship to introduce another to Christian faith. The author reviews his recollections of his friend Octavius after his death: “The sweetness and charm of the man so clings to me that I appear to myself in some sort as if I were returning to past times, and not merely recalling in my recollection things that have long since happened. You would think that one mind had been shared between us two. Thus he alone was the confidant of my loves, the companion with me in my mistakes; and when, after the glom had been dispersed, I emerged from the abyss of darkness into the light of wisdom and truth, he did not cast off his associate but – what is more glorious still he outstripped him.” But it was by no means only among similar temperaments and like-minded people that this method of personal evangelism proved effective.⁴²

As expressed above, there is a place for friendship and personal acquaintance in conveying the Gospel message.

⁴⁰ Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Philip, *Four Views on Salvation in a pluralist World*. (Michigan: Zondervan, 1995), cover 4.

⁴¹ Romans 3:21-25.

⁴² Green, *Evangelism in The Early Church*, 270-272.

The narrative of Philip's encounter with the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts chapter 8 is one of the earliest records of personal evangelism that still moves evangelists to action. What the spirit of God urges to us, individual Christian witnesses, is to see and act on the people whom they see on the roads based on the event from the particular passage that inspires. God speaks to the evangelist through the Word of God. Familiarity with the Word of God gives true vision and passion for the mission of God. Even today, when ministers see individuals on the road, they can apply this lesson, taking action to lead that soul to salvation. People around us whom we see are religious seekers of the Truth like that Ethiopian eunuch:

If it be objected that this account in Acts is highly stylized, the answer must be that this sort of thing did happen, and was known to happen, or there would have been no point in Luke inventing so astonishing a situation.that Luke intended the story of Philip to illustrate the value of this personal evangelism, and the need that those who practice it have for humility and obedient trust in God, for tact and knowledge of the Scriptures, for directness in pointing to Jesus and for bringing the man to the point of decision.⁴³

The Message of the Evangelist

It is important for an evangelist to know the message to be proclaimed,

Evangelism announces that salvation has come. The verb "evangelize" literally means to bear good news. In the noun form, it translates "gospel" or "evangel." The angel's proclamation of Christ's birth is typical of the more than 130 times the term in its various forms occurs in the New Testament: Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.⁴⁴ "The Hebrew term translated in the Septuagint by the same word appears in the writings of Isaiah": "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good

⁴³ Green, *Evangelism in The Early Church*, 270-272.

⁴⁴ Robert E. Coleman, "Evangelism" in A. Scott Moreau, Ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, (Michigan: Baker books, 2000), 341-342.

news. . . “(Isa. 52:7). Again, speaking of the ministry of the coming Messiah, the prophet writes, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord had anointed Me to preach good tidings...” (Isa. 61:1, 2). Jesus interpreted his mission as fulfillment of this promise (Luke 4:18, 19). He saw himself as an evangelist, announcing the coming of the Kingdom of God. This message was to be proclaimed in the context of demonstrated compassion for the bruised and forgotten people of the world. At this point, there is often confusion among Christians today; some contend that evangelism involves only the gospel declaration, while others identify it essentially with establishing a caring presence in society or seeking to rectify injustice. It should be clear that both are necessary. One without the other leaves a distorted impression of the good news. If Jesus had not borne the sorrows of people and performed deeds of mercy among them, people might question his concern. On the other hand, if he had not articulated the gospel, we would not have known why he came, or how we could be saved. To bind up the wounds of the dying, while withholding the message that could bring deliverance to their souls, would leave them still in bondage. Mere social concern does not address the ultimate need of a lost world.⁴⁵

The personal evangelist must know the factors involved in the total mission of Christ to act accordingly.

The first 3 chapters of Genesis contain three revelations of God, which throughout the Bible, figure in all God’s relations to man. The Creator who brought all into existence (Chapter 1); the covenant God who enters into personal relationships with man (chapter 2); the Redeemer who makes provision for the restoration of man (chapter 3).

According to Myer Pearlman the redemption promised in Genesis 3:15, (“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”) has three phases:

⁴⁵ Robert E. Coleman, “Evangelism” in A. Scott Moreau, Ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, (Michigan: Baker Books, 2000) 342.

1. The Serpent or Satan attempts to draw Eve into sin and an alliance with him against God, but God will break it up. There will be a struggle between him and the evil power which cause his fall.
2. The result of that struggle is victory for mankind through the seed of woman. Christ is that seed of woman.
3. But the victory will not be without suffering. At Calvary the serpent bruised the heel of the seed of the woman; but that bruising has brought healing to mankind (Isa 53:3, 4, 12; Dan 9:26; Matt 4:1-10; Luke 22:39-44; Heb 2:18, 5:7; Rev. 2:10).

In Genesis 3:21 we see the redemption pictured. God killed an innocent creature in order to cloth those who were left naked in his sight because of sin. In like manner, the father gives up his son, the innocent one into death in order to provide salvation for the souls of men.⁴⁶

These Bible stories can be narrated by personal evangelists.

Why should any true Christian engage in personal evangelism? Eddie Gibbs expounds on the following nine points about the reasons for which a true Christian should engage in personal Evangelism as follows:

1. Obedience to the Great Commission (Mt28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:45-49; John 17: 18; 20:22; Acts 1:8).
2. Contagious experiences and discipleship (1 John 1:1-3; 1 Cor 9:23).
3. Christ's continuing presence in his disciples with two assurances that he had been given all authority in heaven and on earth; and Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Mt 28:18,20).
4. Concern for the greater glory of God through the extension of his kingdom (John 12:23,27 -28; 17:4,5; 15:8,16; Eph 1 :4-6, 11-12).
5. The universal character of human need (Rom 3: 10-12, 23).
6. His loving concern for the plight of the lost (John 3:16; Acts 20:31; 17:16).
7. The completion of the Church (John 10:16; Luke 11:24; Rom 11:25, 29-31; Phil 2:11).
8. The judgment of Christ and reality of hell (Luke 16; Rev 14:11; Exodus 34:7).
9. The shortness of time until the Christ coming (Mt 24:14; Acts 1:6-8; Gal 6:10; Eph 5: 16, 17; Col 4:5; Mt 7: 15-20; 2 Pet 2: 1-3; Acts 28:29,30; Rom 1: 12, 13).⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Mayer Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*, (Springfield: GPH, 1990), 128-129.

⁴⁷ Eddie Gibbs, *Church Next: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry*, (Intervarsity Press, IL), 55 -63.

He also quotes Samuel Shoemaker's *How to Become a Christian*, "The test of a man's conversation is whether he had enough Christianity to get it over to other people. If he hasn't, there is something wrong in it."⁴⁸ Only when a believer follows Christ, can he be a fisher of men. Christ calls everyone to follow him to make them fish for his people. This was the challenge that he first gave to the Galilean fishers. For these men, following the Lord and fishing are inseparably linked.

J.N. Manokaran brings out three essential ingredients of Christian missional calling and evangelistic leadership based on the life of David from the text of Psalm 78:70-72. He names them as:

1. The call (God chose David),
2. Character (David led his people with the integrity of heart)
3. Competence (He led the people with skillful hand)⁴⁹

Can't these three be the necessary components of successful leadership and evangelistic mission as well?

How can an evangelist be prepared for his task? It is necessary for anyone to learn to know Christ personally before they can witness to him effectively. How can anyone speak of someone whom they do not know? No court will call anyone as a witness of a case that they did not see or know.

Although it is true that Jesus sent His disciples into the whole world to spread the good news, He also told them to wait until they were fully prepared, and it took

⁴⁸ Eddie Gibbs, *Church Next: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry*, (InterVarsity Press, IL), p.56.

⁴⁹ J.N. Manoharan, *Christ and Missional Leaders*, Mission Educational Books 11, Konnur High Road, Ayanavaram, Chennai, 600023, India. 2007. Page 21-26.

time.⁵⁰ It may not take a lot of time to memorize certain Scripture text, to study ways to approach people, or to watch how other workers have brought people to Christ. However, learning to know Christ, to know the power of His resurrection, the depth of His love, requires a lifetime of schooling with the Lord himself. All the Christian ministers always desire to know Him better, when we are working for Him.

Church Growth Movement and Personal evangelism

Those who study and work in the field of evangelism should have an understanding of the Church growth movement.

Church growth is that discipline which investigates the nature, expansion, planting, multiplication, function, and health of Christian churches as they relate to the effective implementation of God's commission to "make disciples of all peoples" (Matt. 28:19-20). Students of church growth strive to integrate the eternal theological principles of God's Word concerning the expansion of the church with the best insights of contemporary social and behavioral sciences, employing as the initial frame of reference the foundational work done by Donald McGavran.⁵¹

Win Arn gives nine key principles of disciple-making, which are helpful for Church. They are:

1. Disciple making is most effective when it is an intentional response by the local Church to the great commission,
2. When focused on "Oikos" (natural networks) of existing Christians.
3. When based on and permeated with love and caring (John 15:12-13).
4. When each Christian has a part in responding to the great commission.
5. When it is a "team effort,"
6. When it is Church centered,
7. When unique needs and individual differences are recognized and celebrated,

⁵⁰ Luke 24:47

⁵¹ C. Peter Wagner, "Church growth Movement" in A. Scott Moreau, *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, (Michigan: Baker Books, 2000) 199.

8. When Biblical insights and Church growth research are integrated, 9. Disciple making is more effective as a natural and continuing process.⁵²

Arn further brings out seven steps for making disciples. They are:

1. Identify your extended family, 2. Develop a personal profile of each extended family member. 3. Focus your efforts. 4. Develop a disciple making plan. 5. Work the disciple making plan. A. Attentively listen B. Relate to needs C. Identify receptive periods. D. Appropriate time E. Use understandable language (Col 4:5-6), 6. Pray regularly and specifically for each extended family member (James 5:16). 7. Accept your accountability to others and to God.⁵³

Rolland E. Grisvold, a denominational leader has observed, "If you and I are to enjoy our disciple making opportunities, we need to take our witness out from behind the walls of our Church building and into our neighborhood... life's greatest satisfactions are found as we witness to what Christ is doing in our lives, while we engage in the normal activities of the day."⁵⁴

In discussing how to reach our extended family, he suggests 1. By caring, 2. By strengthening relationship, 3. By using other members of the body, 4. Enhancing our witness, 5. By providing for a variety of exposures, 6. By patience. In all these the Church is the partner of disciple making.

Win Arn brings nine characteristics of an incorporated member.

1. He identifies with the goals of the Church. 2. He is a regular in worship attendance. 3. He feels a sense of spiritual growth and progress. 4. He has taken necessary steps of affiliation with the body. 5. He has new friends in the Church. 6. He has a task or role appropriates his/her spiritual gifts. 7. He is involved in a fellowship group. 8. He regularly tithes to the church (Matt 6:21). 9. He is a participator in the great commission.⁵⁵

⁵² Win Arn, *The Masters Plan for Disciple Making*, (Monnovia: Church Growth Press, 1982), 58 – 77.

⁵³ Arn, 83 - 95.

⁵⁴ Rolland E. Grisvold, *By Hook and Crook*. (Charlotte: Advent Christian Conference of America, 1981), 97.

⁵⁵ Arn, *The Masters Plan*, 153-159.

We must recognize the master's plan is to the ends of the earth.⁵⁶

A disciple is a believer (John 11:25-26, Acts 16:30-31), a follower (Matthew 16:24, John 13:15), a learner (John 8:31-32, II Tim 2:15), a witness (Mark 5:18-19), one who is baptized (Acts 2:38-41, 42; Acts 22:16), and a reproducer (Matthew 28:19, John 15:8). A disciple follows Jesus who is the light of life, and he does not walk in darkness (John 8:15).

Personal evangelists must have these characteristics so that he can shine for the Gospel. Because church growth through personal evangelism is the goal, disciple-making through personal contact is necessary.

The Further Explanation of the Message of a Personal Evangelist

John Stott brings out the gospel events, the gospel witnesses, and the affirmation of the gospel, the gospel promises and the gospel demands. The gospel events are the death, burial, resurrection and appearance of Jesus (I Cor. 15:3-5). The gospel witness are the fulfillment of Old Testament scriptures and the direct evidence of Apostles (I Cor. 15:3, 4; Luke 1:1-3; Acts 26:22, 23; Mark 3:14; John 15:26; Acts 1:21, 22; Acts 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; Acts 10:39-42). The affirmation of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ is the savior, and he is the Lord. The historical Christ is the contemporary Christ. (Luke 2:1-7; Hebrew 13:8). The gospel promises are the 'forgiveness of sins' and the gift of the

⁵⁶ Mark 16:15-20.

‘Holy Spirit’ (Acts 2:38). Forgiveness is an essential ingredient of the salvation offered in the gospel. (Luke 24:17; John 20:23; Acts 3:19; Acts 10:43; 13:38).

Stott says that however unpopular this message may be today, forgiveness remains man’s chief need and indispensable part of the good news. An evangelist must show through his life an ability to forgive those who trespass against him, to love him who hates him, and to pray for those who persecute as Jesus demonstrated His love to us who were sinners. They must intercede for those who have to come to salvation, and try to teach them patiently as the Word of God instructs.⁵⁷ This interaction of forgiving and interceding occurs primarily in the setting of personal evangelism.

Christ not only offers forgiveness of our past sins, but a new life in the present through the regeneration and indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who is also the guarantee of our future inheritance in heaven. Forgiveness and Spirit, both belong to the salvation which Peter insisted was in Jesus Christ the Lord, and both are the part of the liberation modern man is now seeking.⁵⁸ True freedom is more than deliverance from guilt; it is deliverance from self, from what Malcolm Muggeridge calls, “the dark little dungeon of my own ego.” Once rescued from guilt and self-centeredness, we can give ourselves to the service of God and men, and only in this servitude will true freedom be found. When a believer tries to share this transformation with a non-believer, personal evangelism carries the maximum impact when the non-believer can compare the differences between the past and present of the believer.

⁵⁷ 2 Timothy 2:26.

⁵⁸ Acts 4:12.

John Stott further states concerning the message of the evangelist:

We must not miss the note of urgency as well as authority in which the Apostles issued their call to repent and believe. They were conscious not only that the summons came from the throne where Jesus reigns but also that the same Jesus would return as judge. The God who now commands all men everywhere to repent and already fixed the judgment day and appointed the judge. He is Jesus, the same one who had died and been resurrected (Act 17:30, 31; 3:20, 21; 10:42; 13:40, 41)⁵⁹

Evangelist's Devotion in Serving God

Rick Warren narrates an encounter with Bill Bright, one of the greatest Christian leaders of the 20th century, the founder of Campus Crusade for Christ.⁶⁰ Through Crusade staff around the world, the four Spiritual Laws tract and the Jesus films (seen by over four billion people), more than 150 million people have come to Christ and will spend eternity in heaven. Warren asked Bill, "Why did God use and bless your life so much?" He replied, "When I was a young man, I made a contract with God. I literally wrote it out and signed my name at bottom. It said "From this day forward, I am a slave of Jesus Christ."

Anyone who wants to be used by God must sign a contract with God, like Bill Bright. Many are still arguing and struggling with God over his right to do with his life as he pleases. It's our time to surrender to God's grace, love and wisdom. Why is the Church needed for a person after he accepts Christ as his savior? In *The Purpose Driven Church*, Rick Warren explains how being part of a healthy Church is essential to living a

⁵⁹ John Stott. *Christian Mission in the modern world*. GLS Press: Bombay, 1993, 44-54.

⁶⁰ Rick Warren, *Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?*, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2002), 84.

healthy life. He helps his readers understand how God designed his Church to specially help anyone fulfill the five purposes he has for any Christian's life. He created the Church to meet any Christian's deepest needs namely, 1. A purpose to live for, 2. People to live with, 3. Principles to live by, 4. A Profession to live out, 5. A power live on.

He comments that there is no other place on earth where we can find all five of these benefits in one place. God's purpose for his Church are identical to his five purposes for any Christian.⁶¹ Worship helps us to focus on God; fellowship helps to face life's problems; discipleship helps our faith; ministry helps finds our talents; evangelism helps fulfill our mission. There is nothing else on earth like the Church. Personal evangelism enables believers to fulfill these 5 purposes of life, especially numbers 2 and 5. Personal evangelism always involves having fellowship and witnessing.

Biblical Doctrine Presented to Hearers by Evangelist

In a logical way, Rick Warren presents the importance of Church membership. Just as a newborn child becomes part of universal family of human beings, when a person is born again, he automatically becomes a part of God's universal family, that is, the Church. As a child needs and lives by family to be nurtured, cared, and to grow up healthy and strong, so from Church. He needs to become a member of a local expression of God's family.

He states the difference between being a Church attendee and a Church member is the "commitment." Attendees are spectators from the sidelines, customers;

⁶¹ Warren, *Purpose Driven Life*, 84.

they want the benefits of a Church without sharing the responsibility. Members get involved in the ministry as contributors. Is it because the Church is perfect that we are in it? Anyone can spend a lifetime searching for the perfect Church, but will never find one. We are called to love imperfect sinners, just as God does. So, the Christian life is more than just commitment to Christ, it includes a commitment to other Christians. The Church should employ more personal evangelism to effectively produce more committed believers towards other individuals they seek to lead.

Approaches in Personal evangelism

In considering an approach to evangelism with different kinds of people, we must keep trying until we find a right approach. We must be willing to change our methods. We should let the Holy Spirit lead and control us. Jean-Baptiste Swadego recommends an approach that is natural or positive, not condemning, but showing respect and concern for people by treating them as precious souls worth more than the whole world.⁶²

Dr. George O. Wood, General Superintendent of Assemblies of God, emphasizes serving Christ's cause effectively, with excellence. His book explains five core values - Passionate Proclamation, Strategic Investment, Vigorous Planting, Skillful Resourcing

⁶² Swadego, *Personal Evangelism*, 112-125.

and Frequent Prayer. The core values need to be put into action by every evangelist or minister.⁶³

Since George O. Wood is the Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, the researcher, in a broad sense, serves under him. So, he opened his heart to serve Christ's cause effectively, with excellence. If anyone reads this paper, it should give insight about the growth that is to be taken place under one of the district council of the Assemblies of God. To take note of that purpose, I included the *Core Values* reference in my research. Every evangelist must note these core values to become an effective minister of the gospel.

Jean-Baptiste Swadogo encourages the personal evangelist to expect rewards, both in the present and in the future, known and unknown.⁶⁴ The researcher has included the mention of these rewards so that it might motivate all who read this paper to share the gospel with others.

Summary

Countless books on mission, evangelism, disciple-making, and church growth are available in English. Through the research, a few important points on the importance of personal evangelism, the call of evangelists, their preparation, the implementation, the tactics to overcome the obstacles and thereby achieve church growth, have been

⁶³ George O. Wood with Randy Hurst, *Core Values*, (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 2007), 5-112

⁶⁴ Swadego, *Personal Evangelism*, 112-125.

highlighted. In order to fulfill the Great Commission, all church members must be motivated to know the command of Christ. They should be made aware of the cause and reason for their existence, which is to live for Christ their redeemer.

Members must live according to the call they have received for evangelism, and they must make sure of their calling and election through the word of God, as in 2 Peter 1:9.

The Church needs to grow in their expertise and practice of ministry. Members must keep on studying and preparing for the continuance of ministry. They must be able to defend the cause of Christ who asks hard questions. They should not exalt themselves or take glory, but God's glory must shape the work of the evangelist.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT DESIGN

In exploring the thesis, “The Power of Personal Evangelism that Stimulates the Church Growth,” the researcher used three main research methods to gather empirical data to build upon the theological framework and the literature review. The three methods were descriptive narrative, statistical analysis, and surveys. The main research question asked if the churches in Kerala, India, could grow effectively and quantitatively for the glory of God by implementing principles of personal and small group evangelism within the 21st century cultural milieu.

Personal evangelism is important, in that every Christian spends a portion of their time talking to friends, family, people in their workplace, or neighbors. When they use these encounters to turn conversation to things of God with the intent of helping others come to know and understand Him, it becomes personal evangelism. Personal evangelism is said to be the most effective method of evangelism.¹ Every other form of evangelism, in some way or another, depends upon and is enriched by personal evangelism. The Great Commission is fulfilled by one’s involvement in personal evangelism.² If believers are faithful and apt to teach others, the world can be won soon for God’s glory.

¹ *Developing Ministerial Skills: An Independent-Study Textbook*, First edition, (Bangalore, Assemblies of God of India Commission on Ministerial Education, 2001), 30.

² *Developing Ministerial Skills*, 30.

An advantage of personal evangelism is that anyone who is born again engage in personal evangelism. It can be done anywhere, anytime. It can be used to reach all classes of people. It can be very specifically targeted to the prospect.³

Within his daily ministry and teaching, the researcher attempted to implement the results of positive achievements to answer the research questions. Between 2009 to 2011, he helped to lead church seminars for vision renewal at Trivandrum, Punalur, Palaghat and Cochin, for ministers, pastors, and evangelists, in the first week of January, with about 200 attendants. Feedback from these seminars was received in the form of interviews and surveys. The survey questions and results appear in the appendix.

These meetings emphasized doing ministry personally to reach the unreached. The researcher tried to raise their morale to do personal evangelism by reminding them that St. Thomas, one of the apostles who personally knew Jesus, is believed to have come to Kerala to begin the church, a great legacy they have inherited. The known proof of St. Thomas' arrival to Kerala is furnished in chapter 1 of this paper, and in the appendix.⁴ It was assumed that if they were aware of their foundations, they could carry on the work with more motivation and enthusiasm.

Every evangelist must know the work of the devil that causes ineffectiveness in evangelism. This is what has happened in the previous centuries. Today's Christians can learn from their forefathers and former leaders who were fervent in working for the Lord, even with limited possibilities and resources. Former Indian/Keralite leaders all

³ *Developing Ministerial Skills*, 30.

⁴ Appendix 1.

took part to influence people personally for Christ. The Keralite leaders know these men of God and their influential lives.

Personal evangelism is among the best evangelism methods used to overcome the stunted growth of the past. This has been demonstrated through the seminars, talks, and training provided for the co-ministers. This was verified by sample surveys and interviews conducted among members of a church in Trivandrum in August 2010. Of 50 church members surveyed, 40 made decisions for salvation through personal evangelism.⁵ Leaders must motivate those under their leadership—sectional leaders, ministers and evangelists, and all Christians committed to the fulfillment of the Great Commission—to be equipped for the work of the ministry. They must work day and night to reach the world.

The researcher presented the following personal characteristics for success in personal evangelism:

1. An evangelist must first of all be deeply committed to the Lord in his or her personal life and live through to his conviction and confession. Any hypocrisy will soon be evident and become a great hindrance (Mt.16: 24, Gal. 2: 20, Rev. 3:14-16).
2. He must be assured of his personal salvation. He must realize that the blood of Jesus continues to cleanse us from all sins and appropriate continually to continue to live in fellowship with God. He must demonstrate the work of God in his own personal life before he recommends it to someone else.
3. The evangelist must have a firm conviction that Jesus is the only way to salvation, and that all people without Christ are lost eternally (John 8:24, II Thess. 1:7-9)
4. The evangelist must have a deep love for the Lord and passion for the lost. That knowledge alone cannot lead a person to salvation.
5. The evangelist needs to display humility in his attitude to other people. He must develop a friendly posture with all people, and not enter a debate or argument. A debate can ruin friendship. It is not about winning an

⁵ See Appendix for details.

argument; rather winning the soul must be his concern.

6. The evangelist must be burdened for the prospect, pray and intercede for the unsaved people (2 Cor. 5: 14-21).
7. The evangelist must have great patience and perseverance, and hopeful, not giving up easily (Heb10: 35-38).
8. The evangelist must have a good working knowledge of the Word of God and be willing to constantly study and learn more. He must use the Scripture and concrete historical evidences. He must be careful in his enthusiasm, not resorting to unfounded stories and false testimonies. A lie cannot save a person (Luke 2:1-7, 3:1-4; I Tim.4:1-3, I Pet.3:15).
9. The evangelist must be willing to work hard, but not try to do the work of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts and transforms people; we are only His instruments.
10. The evangelist must keep looking for opportunities all the time, and be sensitive to the Spirit's prompting (Acts 8:26-31; 10:19; 11:12; 13:2, 4; 16:6-7).⁶

If the church and ministers do their part, the covenant-keeping Christ will do the rest for His glory.⁷ For this reason, we provide training to new laborers, and to those who are already in the church and committed to fulfill the Great Commission, because a lack of knowledge can keep them from doing their part.

An ignorance of the above guidelines is evident in new trainees admitted to Bible Colleges. Out of the researcher's personal ministry of 25 years in teaching forty Bible college students twice every week, it was apparent students lacked knowledge of the Scripture. At the time of their admission, faculty conduct written tests to measure their understanding of Scripture, followed by an oral interview. Before graduation, as they complete their studies, these students show proof of their acquired knowledge, and

⁶ *Developing Ministerial Skills*, 2001, 32.

⁷ Mark 16:15-20.

many show excellence in their academic studies, campus life, practical behavior, evangelism field, different class tests, library attendance, and preaching in the chapel.

When they were trained in classrooms and on the field, and filled with the Word of God, they showed effectiveness in ministry. They also displayed maturity in all aspects of their study. They were examined theoretically and practically. Not only do their grades, but their own words of testimonies of improvement bear proof of their excellence.

The researcher had the privilege to be an evangelism teacher in the Bible college, along with other religious subjects that handled different secular and religious people of the society in Kerala, India, and worldwide. The questions he asked students over a period of time were about the infallibility and inspiration of Scriptures; their understanding about God; the special creation of man; their knowledge about angels and fallen-angels; the fact of sin; the fall of man and God's grace; the redemptive work of God to redeem man; the nature, the offices and the works of Christ; the atonement; the nature of salvation, justification, regeneration, sanctification; the security of salvation; the teaching about the Holy Spirit; the church as the community of the redeemed and redeeming; and the knowledge of the Last Things.

In one survey of 50 students who had a church background, only 10-20 students were able to provide satisfactory answers with reference to Scripture. Between 60-80 percent were unaware of basic biblical facts, such as those listed below. The following is a sample of the list of the survey questions used to check their knowledge of biblical facts:

1. How can you prove that the Bible is infallible and is inspired, from your life's experiences?
2. What is the importance of the Bible?
3. Are people able to know God thorough nature, their conscience?
4. Narrate the creation account. Is man a special creation? Describe it.
5. How do you understand sin?
6. How do you explain the cause of sin?
7. Who are the Patriarchs? Name them. In whose tribe Jesus was born?
8. Write the Ten Commandments in order with reference.
9. What are the prophetic books and their message?
10. Why are the poetic books called the Wisdom Books?
11. What is the importance of Jesus coming as the Savior?
12. Who is Jesus? Describe his offices and work.
13. Narrate some of the contents of the Sermon on the Mount and how do you understand them in the light of the Old Testament?
14. How do you explain the suffering of Jesus Christ?
15. What is the work of the Holy Spirit?
16. What do you know about the church and what is its future?
17. What happens at the return of the second coming of Christ?
18. How do you describe your call to the ministry? Tell about your church background.
19. Why should evangelist introduce church fellowship?

The following summarizes the responses received from the questions above:

Basic biblical facts that need to be taught to the trainees	Before	After
Creation of the world in 6 days (24hr each), Greatness of God in the Bible and His Reality than other man-made stories of creation	60-80% do not know clearly;	80%+ Know with Scriptural reference to explain to others
Man as a special creation of God, the greatness of each soul worth more than the whole world		
Existence of good and bad angels, their services		
The fall of man by sin through Satan		
Jesus Christ, the only savior sent by God the father, and His teachings		
Trinity, the work of the Holy Spirit		
Importance of the church with fellowship of God and saved people		
The future of the church, laboring for the extension of His kingdom		
The second coming of Christ		
The protection of God's children by God through good angels, safety and security		
Power of prayer and listening from Jesus (Matt 22:29, John 7:37-39)		
Daily proclamation of salvation for the church growth		
Practicing tithes and offerings, to promote the work of God and to be blessed of God		
The coming judgment, eternal life and eternal damnation		

The following questions were part of a survey conducted among 200 Assemblies of God pastors and evangelists within a period of two years between January 2009 and December 2010. The survey was conducted by the researcher personally, and answers were received for him to examine their knowledge out of it:

Questions asked to pastors and evangelists:

1. How often do you engage in using the opportunity in personal evangelism?
2. Describe the conversion of Paul. Who released Paul to the ministry?
3. How do you recollect the ministry of Philip at Samaria and to the Ethiopian eunuch?
4. What is the content of the evangelistic message?
5. What is the importance of the book of Jonah?
6. Do you carry a Bible in your hand and try to read from it to influence the listeners that it is from the Book of the Lord?
7. Do you know that salvation is the free gift of God through faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8, Romans 6:23)?
8. Are you aware of 2 Timothy 2:8, Romans 1:16-17, Romans 10:1-17, Acts 4:12, John 14:6, John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 8:9, 1Corinthians 1:18-31, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17?
9. What is the importance of making friends with the unrighteous mammon?
10. Do you know what is Leviticus 27:30-34, Malachi 3:7-12, Luke 6:38, Proverbs 11:24, 1Corinthians 16:1-4, 2 Corinthians 8-9?
11. Can you narrate a few recent experiences of personal witness and its effect?

Basic biblical facts that needs to be taught	Pastors and Evangelists
Evangelism is a daily business	80% believes, but not passing it on effectively
Ministering by listening to the guidance of the Holy Spirit	80% believes, but not prompted by the Holy Spirit
Brief Content of the evangelistic message	50% doesn't know for sure
Importance of the Book of Jonah, the missionary prophet	60% doesn't know the contents
Importance of carrying the Bible with them to show the listeners a proof	80% do not carry the Bible with them while they travel or attending different functions
Memorization of certain important Bible verses connected with the evangelism	80% have learned but forgotten it
Spending money for the Gospel work along with their time	80% do not consider it as a privilege or give joyfully that they would be blessed more
Recent experiences to narrate the demonstration that the Lord used them, worked for them or through them miraculously	Only 20% have exuberant, vital experiences or testimonies to share
The protection of God's children by God through good angels, safety, and security	All of them experiences it, but not knowing exactly that it is by the mercy of the Lord
Power of prayer and listening from Jesus (Matt 22:29, John 7:37-39)	Many knows, but not casting their anxiety on God
Practicing tithes and offerings, to promote the work of God and to be blessed of God	50% are not set apart tithes and offerings, and not giving to the respective higher offices
The awareness of coming judgment and rewards for evangelists, the eternal life and eternal damnation of the unsaved	Many doesn't know clearly, and not preaching it

Similar results were observed when this survey was administered to 120 ministers of Assemblies of God Churches in the Trivandrum area. Many areas of the Trivandrum District were not yet reached with the gospel, especially places such as Attingal, Varkala, and Chirayinkil. The minister may have seen people as unprofitable, instead of being precious as God saw them, as was evident from the lack of growth in that district. Perhaps, they need a nother touch by the Lord to see them as he does. The

blind man saw humans as trees and needed a second touch on his eyes from Jesus.⁸

Paul prayed for the Ephesians to have enlightened eyes of understanding.⁹

The survey revealed that 50 percent were unaware of the following basic truths, no did they put into practice what they did know. They did not know of the love of God manifested to the whole world, nor the value of one soul as worth more than gaining the world.¹⁰ Sixty percent of the ministers were not sure that salvation was the free gift of God through faith in Jesus Christ. It is not earned by their own labor of righteousness, but by the love of God through Jesus Christ.¹¹ Sixty percent of the ministers needed a second touch on their way of seeing people as precious in God's sight.

Every time the researcher met a fellow A/G minister or ministers, he inquired about their work and informally asked those questions over and over again, to remind them of the subjects addressed in these questions. Along with that, he took time to teach them and motivate them for more evangelism.

The researcher had some experiences in working with some presbyters, and with those who are in leadership of the churches. The following are observations made after interviewing A/G church leaders and Presbyters:

Sample Questions to Church Leaders and Presbyters

1. How long have you been in leadership at sectional level or district council

⁸ Mark 8:22-26.

⁹ Ephesians 1:17-19.

¹⁰ John 3:16; Matthew 16:26, Mark 8:36.

¹¹ Ephesians 2:4-8.

level?

2. What were the problems you faced in your leadership?
3. What could you teach and promote about personal evangelism?
4. What are the medias you used?
5. How often have you delegated your responsibility to others?
6. How often have you engaged in personal ministry?
7. How often are you able to inspire those under you with the biblical doctrines?
8. How do you handle problems based on I Corinthians 11:19?
9. How do you raise money for more missions?
10. How much importance do you give to prayer and listening from the Lord?

Basic organizational and spiritual ideas that needs to be reminded	Church Leaders and Presbyters
Duration of office or donation of services to the concerned	Few wanted to do a lot of things within one year, two years, or their allowed years of terms; A majority wanted to hold their office indefinitely without doing proper work they are assigned
Importance of bringing love, unity, and progress	A majority do not try to settle problems in the churches, or in their concern properly
The medias they use	Half of them do not have effective communication strategies.
Different kind of leadership attitude: autocratic, aristocratic, democratic, theocratic	A majority want to please people, rather than pleasing God always; they include autocratic, aristocratic, and democratic favor; few want to have theocracy
Consulting with others	Half of them do not want to consult with others that are concerned when a serious problem comes
Going to the Word of God to find the answers for problems	A majority know, but don't follow according to the Word of God
Making the heretic correction	50% do not do anything about heresies, to correct them and to bring them the proper knowledge
Consulting the constitution and the bylaws of the organization	Majority of them know, but do not give emphasis to it.
Engagement in personal evangelism to new people	Very rarely, because they have arranged programs of the leadership
The leadership goes to the people or problems, or the people and problems come to them	Most of them do not take the initiative, only when the thunder and storm come are they involved
Power of prayer and listening to Jesus (Matt 22:29, John 7:37-39)	Many knows, but not taking considerable time so that the work of God can be manifested
Practicing tithes and offerings so that they should be an example	50% have to limit their expenses and find money for more missions

The survey revealed that most of them were fearful and lacked faith to launch new efforts to promote the Gospel. For example, when asked about their viewpoint on establishing a Christian printing press, some responded positively. However, most were unwilling to do so out of concerns over new troubles created by the employees. Unless those who are in authority desire new things, they cannot take place. The presbyters were also fearful to point out the needed progress to happen in the district council area. The production of Christian literatures was needed to promote personal evangelism and to give people material to read and memorize the facts of the Word.

Out of my 15 years of district council leadership (1988-2003), as secretary, treasurer, and committee member, I have come to understand that only 20 percent of ministers are using the available opportunities for evangelism expansion from the report collected and presented in the district council meeting every year from 1988-2003.¹² The years 1988-2003 comes directly from the researcher's personal experience because the level of church growth can be understood from those reports. Even after this period (1988-2003), Reverend P.S. Rajamony, the General Superintendent of the South India Assemblies of God, often reveals in his talk that the majority of the people of the church and the ministers are not engaged in evangelism. He lately revealed this on February 10th, 2010, at Punalur, during Bethel Bible College's 81st graduation to express concern about the lack of the church's impact on society. The church is not advancing forward because of the lack of teaching by pastors and because of a lack of clear direction about where their mission fields could be. Who needs to be evangelized? If people don't know

¹² This was identified from the written requests of them filed to the AG Office, Kerala.

the answer to that question, they are not going to engage in personal evangelism. The evangelists' mission field could be his own house or church or community. The possibilities are many:

1. Children of members of the church
2. Spouses of members
3. Friends and relatives of the members
4. Friends and parents of member's children
5. Friends who attend youth functions with church youth
6. Contacts from benevolent ministry
7. Sunday School and VBS contacts
8. Visitors to worship services
9. Hospital Contacts
10. Members who have stopped attending church
11. Neighbors
12. Fellow Employees
13. People who travel with members
14. People who transact business with members
15. People who serve members
16. Newcomers to Town or locality
17. Visitors to members home
18. Those attending funerals
19. Jail & Prison ministry contacts
20. Rest Homes and Old people homes
21. Radio, Web & TV Contacts
22. Friends of new believers
23. People seeking counseling
24. Those getting married
25. People undergoing trauma¹³

Sixty to eighty percent of AG Pastors who request transfers want to move to new places, looking for imaginary comfort without doing anything significant in the evangelism field at their previous places.¹⁴ This fact was known to almost all in the

¹³ *Developing Ministerial Skills*, 30-31.

¹⁴ This was identified from the written requests of them filed to the AG Office, Kerala, in the years 2008-2010.

district council, that pastors are moving and trying to pastor in other churches. It was mutually understood that they were unwilling to continue facing the challenges and trials of ministry in their current ministry location. Yet, anywhere they go, they have to face hardships and go through trials and testing in the ministry.

Only 50 percent of ministers remember with gratitude the former leaders who had preached the Word to them and are follow their example.¹⁵ Among the 50 ministers the researcher asked via questionnaires in two sectional meetings in the Trivandrum area and in the Karunagapally section in August and September of 2010 respectively, only 25 were aware of who the former ministers were who influenced them and who have worked in the churches they are pastoring now. Only 50 percent knew the history and the pioneers of the churches they were pastoring. The biographies of the pioneers should be brought out for more motivation as suggested in Hebrews 13:7-8. The researcher believes that these are some of the biblical foundations that the church should be built upon to become stronger. Church people also must know the histories of their former preachers' sufferings and their joys, so that they might continue in their current ministry.

The researcher printed and published songs of motivation to distribute among the trainees. He published, with the help of others, the biography of a few former leaders. He wrote and published many Christian articles and published in many local

¹⁵ Hebrews 13:7-8

magazines. These were read by the trainees and had a positive impact on those who read them.¹⁶

Out of 200 AG ministers whom the researcher contacted and interviewed personally during January to November 2010, in different occasions at church council meetings, wedding ceremonies, funerals and other public meetings, about 120 were willing to answer or reply, supplemented through telephone and mobile phone contacts. The questions asked included some basic Biblical teaching such as:

1. Do you remember what the two most important commandments are?
2. What is the Great Commission? Write with the reference?
3. How is it enforced? (Acts 1:8)
4. What is it that all the Laws and Prophets teach?
5. To which event did Jesus explain himself from Moses through all the prophets?
6. What is the Golden text of the Bible? (Bible within the Bible, Bible Miniature)
7. In what context did Jesus say, "If you lift up your eyes?"
8. When and what did Jesus say in connection with "the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few?"

Out of one hundred people with whom the researcher shared the Gospel personally in different places, while house visiting, wedding ceremonies, funerals, marketplace, visiting various government offices, 80 percent were willing to listen and accept the salvation of Jesus during 2009-2010. Eighty percent of people whom I contacted with the Gospel were convicted by the Holy Spirit to accept salvation, though in the beginning they were not sure about the fact of sin and the works of the devil. The researcher was influenced to share the Gospel message by following God's command to "daily and always" proclaim His salvation, daily waiting on the door step of God to listen

¹⁶ Many have called the researcher stating that they were motivated and are working in the hands of God effectively.

to Him.¹⁷ The researcher collected the list of their names, addresses, and contacts to follow up them. By the responses they show, by asking the researcher to see them again or visit their home, he can understand that they are getting faith, just as the time Paul preached at Lystra to a lame man and understood that he had faith to receive his blessings.¹⁸

This is a brief, condensed message that the believers can give to their newly acquainted friends.¹⁹ The researcher feels that when they know what they ought to share, personal evangelism will be easier:

Have you heard the greatest Good News? It is about the love of God expressed through Jesus Christ. Some think that Christ is for Christians only. But Christ means “the anointed One,” sent by God the Father. All of us have only one God the Creator. He must be known by his true name. As all of our personality have three parts—body, soul, and spirit—God has three persons: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Now, I am empowered with the Holy Spirit to share the love of God. Though we were created by the same God, there is an enemy of us and God, Satan. He deceived the first parents, Adam and Eve. All of us have inherited the sinful nature through them. All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. The wages of sin is eternal death, going to hell to be with Satan forever. But God loved us so much, though in his holiness he hates sin, but he loves the sinner. No one was able to purchase the pardon for sin. So God Himself took the initiative in his love, to send Jesus, the Son of God, the Redeemer, to die in our place. Jesus is God Himself. It’s a mystery that we may not understand fully. His death on the cross propitiated as a sacrifice paid for the debt of our sin. He offers freely the justification by us putting our trust in this historical fact. Jesus died, but on the third day, he arose. His tomb is empty. He is now at the right hand of the Father, but by His Holy Spirit present with us. The Word of God says, if you can believe this, you will get saved. He calls you for salvation.

¹⁷ Psalm 96:3; Proverbs 8:34-35, Acts 17:11.

¹⁸ Acts 14:8-10.

¹⁹ Personal evangelistic message by T J Rajan, the researcher.

By giving this appeal, many have been willing to take the first step to pass from eternal death to eternal life. Our further duty is to make known Jesus and to show His praises by teaching and following up, so that they might believe this personally and do share it with their dear ones. When they are properly educated of the basic facts, they will start engaging in personal evangelism as they should.

The following points are results of interactions with people, about the basic biblical facts, before and after the evangelistic witnessing done during the year 2009-2010:

- **Creation of the world in 6 days (24 hours each):** Prior to the witnessing, the majority of the people stated they did not know the facts about the creation of the world in 6 days, or about the greatness of God in the Bible to be greater than other man-made stories of creation. Following the evangelistic witnessing, most of them were convicted that the Lord created the heaven and the earth, sun, moon, stars, and that there is a Creator behind everything. Still, these people need to continued proper Biblical teaching, so that they will be built upon the eternal Words of Jesus.
- **Man as a special creation of God:** Before the people were presented with the biblical facts, the majority of them did not know man to be a special creation of God, or that the greatness of each soul to be worth more than the whole world. But after witnessing, many of them began to accept that a man is worth more than the whole world, and they began to realize that they should thank God for their wonderful salvation that they have freely received.

- **Angels and their services:** Most of the people who were witnessed to did not recognize or believe in the existence of good and bad angels, or their services. The majority of them did not understand the goodness and protection God offers his children through good angels. However, after witnessing, when they received the salvation message, most of them were happy to realize that they have angels to protect them because they are saved.²⁰ They also realized they can be secured and saved through the protection of angels who are ministering spirits.
- **Fall of man by sin:** Before witnessing to them, the majority of the people did not know about the fall of man by sin through Satan. Following the witnessing, and the salvation experience, the majority of them realized that sin is an actual fact, and they are redeemed from original sin, but they must keep themselves pure.
- **Jesus Christ as the only Savior:** Most of the people witnessed to, did not know Jesus Christ as the only Savior sent by God the father, or his teachings, and thus they did not worship God in Spirit and in Truth. After witnessing, the majority were convicted that the Creator came to the world as a man.²¹
- **Understanding of Trinity:** Before they were witnessed to, most people did not have an understanding about the Trinity or about the work of the Holy Spirit, as they did not know Jesus and they had not received the Holy Spirit.

²⁰ Hebrews 1:14.

²¹ John 1:3.

After being witnessed to, and with follow up, most of them received the light of this understanding.

- **Importance of Church and fellowship with other believers:** Before being presented with biblical facts, many people did not understand the importance of fellowship with God's people. After witnessing, the majority of them were invited to have fellowship with God's people, and taught about the importance of church.
- **Power of Prayer and listening to Jesus (Matt. 22:29, John 7:37-39):** Before these biblical truths were taught, they did not know the uniqueness of Jesus' name, and thus they were not able to pray correctly to the true and living God. After witnessing, they were encouraged to cultivate the habit of reading the Bible and praying to Jesus.
- **Daily proclamation of the salvation message for Church growth:** The people were not aware of the fact that all of them have to come to salvation as God wills.²² It is important that these people who were presented with the biblical truths be motivated to share this Good News to others in their families, among their friends and neighbors.
- **Practicing tithes and offering:** Before the people were presented with the biblical truths, they did not know the importance of giving back to God to honor him, to promote the work of God, and to be blessed by God. When

²² 1 Timothy 2:5.

they were pagans, they offered their offerings to an unknown God, but now that they have truly come to know God and recognize that everything that they have is from God, they were taught to give a part or fully according to their faith, so that they can be blessed abundantly.

- **Future of the Church:** Many of the people did not accept the biblical fact about the future of the church, laboring for the extension of God's kingdom, and that Jesus will come to receive those who are engaged with him as a man is engaged with a woman for marriage. Once they were witnessed to and followed up with the Biblical truths, they were taught to keep the covenant of faith they had made.
- **The Second Coming of Jesus Christ:** Before they were presented with the biblical facts, they were not convicted about the first coming, and thus they did not believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ. After witnessing, and follow-up teaching, they were notified that the time of the second coming is near, established by the signs that are taking place around the world.
- **The coming judgment, eternal life, and eternal damnation:** People did not know about these biblical facts before they were presented with them. After witnessing, their eyes were opened and they entered into eternal life, and they realized that they must be watchful to save others from eternal damnation.

When Word of God is taught, people may be offended, but they must be brought to enlarge their hearts. They have to be made aware of the works of the flesh, all the

characteristics of sin in Romans 1:18-32, Galatians 5:18-22, I Corinthians 6:9-11, and to be convicted that a sinless savior is needed to save their lives. They were not sure about life after death, but they were made aware of the victorious life through the blood of Jesus Christ and the fruitful state of life through the Word of God. They were given an awareness of the uniqueness of Scripture as a light for their feet and lamp for their paths. They were made known of the importance of this life on earth to inherit eternal life and immortality. They were taught that there are three persons in one God. They were made to understand the love of God manifested on the cross of Calvary for their redemption as a historical fact. The opened tomb and the living Jesus were by the Word of God, that they can know God right here in front of them. They can experience the power of the Holy Spirit to witness this living Christ to others. They were made known that the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old Testament, and were taught to search the Old Testament to see the proof of the promised Messiah. They were warned to escape from the coming judgment of God's wrath that is about to come upon the whole world. They were appealed to accept Christ right now, "for this is the day of salvation."²³ They were given future glory that they can be great and greatest in the kingdom of God by serving others by all possible means, and observing and teaching the Truth as it is.²⁴ The importance of church fellowship is to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The researcher is of the conviction that the Word of God

Must be nigh even in His mouth and in His heart, that is, the word of faith, which He preach. That people can confess with their mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall

²³ 2 Corinthians 5:10, Acts 17:30-31.

²⁴ Matthew 5:19, 18:104.

believe in their heart that God hath raised him from the dead, then he shall be saved. For with heart, man believeth into righteousness, and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For as saith, "Lord, who hath believed out report?" So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.²⁵

The researcher was able to explain the Gospel briefly. The researcher has tried as much as he was able use opportunities in the city and in the villages to share the "ABC's" of the Gospel: A—All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, B—Believe that Jesus Christ is the Savior, C—Come to Him and Confess sins, and receive cleansing through the power of Jesus. This was the description and explanation implemented to get answers of the "hows" of this passage received by oral and printed questionnaire, interviews, training, and motivating the ministers. The detailed questions and results of the interviews are the consolidated data of the survey that was about the detailed information of respective area of biblical knowledge that can increase effectiveness in personal evangelism. These activities were conducted at various occasions during 2009-2010.

The researcher found through his interactions with church leaders that the majority are ineffective and resistant to finding proper solutions for the problems they face, and the matter gets worse. Leadership is mainly comprised of district and sectional

²⁵ Romans 10:8-17 (KJV).

leaders. The work of God is not manifested among the district council or the sectional levels as God intends to manifest it. Vain glory and stubbornness are statements taken from Philippians 2:1-4, 19-22. It is a call for everyone to examine their hearts. Make them go to the Court of Gentiles to vindicate their cases, applying the situation that Corinthian church faced.²⁶ The group's stagnation will affect all those who are concerned with personal evangelism. The researcher has heard about lawsuits against church leadership due to actions taken against innocent pastors in the church council minutes presented in the district council. The leadership should take the initiative to forget and forgive, and to suffer shame and reproach for the sake of the name of the Lord. Leaders should be "kind, one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven them."²⁷

Church ministers must continue in their place of responsibility to establish their work with stability and long-suffering to have an increase in membership and effectiveness. Then, they can have a remarkable work, rather than moving from one place to another, expecting imaginary results. The researcher compared the ministries of ministers of the Malayalam district council and the neighboring state of Tamil Nadu, and found stable and long-term leaders of strong churches in quality and quantity. From the South India Assemblies of God, statistical reports presented by the superintendent of each district, the Malayalam district council has below 100,000 church members and adherents, whereas in Tamil Nadu, it's more than 300,000 in September 2010. The

²⁶ 1 Corinthians 6.

²⁷ Ephesians 4:32.

Assemblies of God work first started in Kerala, before the work began in Tamil Nadu. The researcher is concerned about the progress of the work of the Malayalam district council. Unless many personal evangelists arise in Kerala, we cannot have the advancement and the influence of the church in the society. If all the committed Christians are put to work daily, the stunted growth can be reversed and progress can be made.

People of the church who were taught the importance of evangelism have been effective in reaching out to the society. The church and area where the researcher is pastoring is showing wonderful results as each member reaches out to at least one person a day. The results are surveyed, verified, and encouraged every Sunday. Even though the local church of the researcher is limited in their seating capacity to accommodate many people during their services, they are encouraged to be witnesses wherever they go, thus being a sending church. They are exhorted to encounter seven hundred people in a week (i.e. one hundred per day by one hundred members who listen to the teaching and share in worshipping the Lord).

In order to fulfill the Great Commission, all God's people must love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with our entire mind. And we need to love our neighbors as ourselves.²⁸ Jesus said, "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."²⁹ It is said that the 613 commandments of the Old Testament are captured in these two. The researcher has tried to remind all the trainees under him

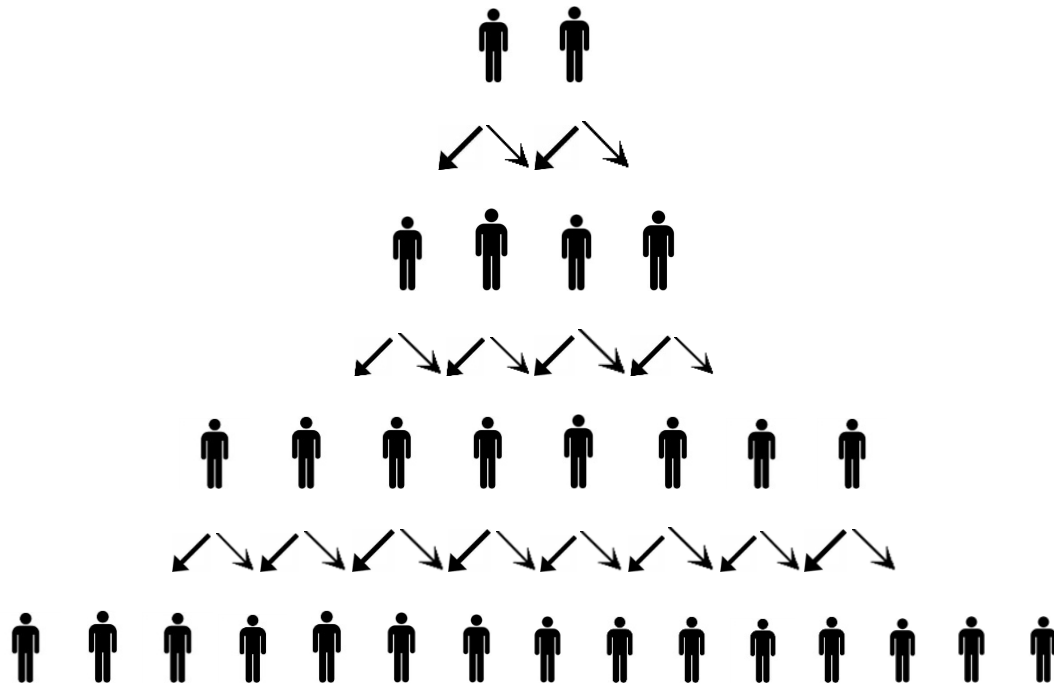
²⁸ Matthew 22:37-39.

²⁹ Matthew 22:40.

of these truths on different occasions. If the trainees take these two commands to heart, and embark on personal evangelism, there should be amazing church growth in Kerala. These commandments motivate believers to fulfill the Great Commission by personally winning souls for the Kingdom of God. If 500 evangelize, reaching one person a day for 30 days, 15,000 could be reached. In 365 days, 5,475,000 could be reached. That is what is to be expected if everyone reaches one person regularly. If the Lord tarries to come, in ten years, 54,750,000 could be reached.

The researcher expects of the 1,000 trainees he has trained in the last 25 years, if at half the effectiveness rate, at least 500 are reminded, motivated, and empowered to reach out according to the above formula. If so, the vision is that within ten years, Kerala will have a glorious future in reaching the lost for the kingdom of God. In everything, there is a commitment to the time process. Time is an element for the fulfillment of desire or dream of evangelism. Another demonstration of the expectation of the evangelism growth is explained in the following diagram. If each new believer who is led to receive Christ leads two others to receive Christ, the following diagram can explain the exponential potential of personal evangelism. If someone who is led to receive the Lord begins to reach out to two persons each, and then, when they are reached, to disciple them to reach out to two person each, in a mere three such cycles, he would have been instrumental in reaching twenty-eight persons, as observed in the following diagram. If this chain continues, the exponential growth continues in the order of 2,4,8,16,32,64,128,256,512,1024, etc. The best part of this approach to evangelism is that, at any point in time, a disciple is only responsible to disciple two others. If this

approach is consistently followed, the whole of Kerala will be reached with the Gospel of Jesus Christ soon.



After the approval of this thesis, the findings will circulate among all those who are concerned to carry on attempts to reach the expectations. The hope is that God will bring to pass what he said so long ago:

Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. But the just shall live by his faith."³⁰

³⁰ Habakkuk 2:2-4.

CHAPTER 5

OUTCOMES

Imperatives

Having researched the topic theologically and biblically, examined previous literature on the subject, and analyzed the cause and effects by those who do and do not promote evangelism, a few factors have become evident that can lead to church growth by personal evangelism. The imperatives listed below are the most significant to be considered in relationship to evangelism and church growth.

The Church Should Return to the Preaching of the Basics of the Bible

The church should return to the basics of the Bible to make the members convinced, committed, and commissioned to do the Great Commission by preaching the fundamental truths of God: the creation of the world, special creation of man, good and bad angels, the sin, the fall of man, the savior Jesus Christ, the preparation of the church by the Holy Spirit, the future of the church, everlasting life and everlasting damnation, and eternity.

The church should remember that they are called of God to do the ministry for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.¹ The church is called to worship, to work, to witness, to war, and to win. Today, only about twenty percent of active church people

¹ Matthew 28:19.

who do succeed at ministry and church growth are aware of this fact.² Truly committed senior leadership of the church should preach and share with others to remind the other eighty percent to also testify about improvement in the future of all aspects of life, namely spiritual, mental, physical, and social.³ The improvement must be known by local and distant responsible people of authority (I Tim. 4:6-16, 5:17-18, II Tim.1:3-14, Phil. 1:12-14).⁴ Frequent testing must be done by pastors, presbyters, and those in leadership among the eighty percent, to bring them to the conviction of these biblical, eternal facts. It is not enough to say, “Hello,” and leave them non-evangelized, but evangelists must lead them to the whole truth.

Leaders are vision casters for change. Vision in the kingdom of God is revelation, God’s revelation of His plan and will.⁵ Vision is God’s revelation to mankind, His illumination to man. The vision catches us and acts upon us, and it is done only through the Word of God, the Holy Bible. Without God, man is in utter darkness and cannot find his way; but God has illuminated, or lighted his way, through Jesus. He is God’s vision for every human born into this world.

The growing church must catch and develop a vision, and lift this vision higher in a way they have never done before. God’s vision represents a challenging picture of what the church and its members can be. It can show the church what is a possible and desirable future. Evangelists, or leaders, caught by God’s vision, create exciting

² From the Church reports (2008 – 2010) kept at the Malayalam District Council Office at Punalur, Kerala.

³ Luke 2:40, 52.

⁴ 1 Timothy 4:6-16, 5:17-18; 2 Timothy 1:3-15; Philippians 1:12-14.

⁵ Proverbs 29:18.

projections about where the church should go and what its lifestyle should be. Though it takes time, it will come to pass.⁶

Every Minister or Evangelist Must Seek a Deep Intimacy with God Himself

Another important factor for effectiveness in personal evangelism, and thereby church growth, is the maintenance of an intimate relationship with God. From the researcher's observation, the majority of the evangelists who are effective in their ministry have a noticeable personal relationship with God in prayer and set time to listen to God himself, thereby developing a forgiving spirit and also a loving desire to warn the unruly, to comfort the feeble minded, to support the weak, and to be patient towards all men.⁷ Prayer is absolutely essential to any change of growth, and for the abundance of peace. Prayer is the breath and life of church growth. Prayer is an absolute move, and everyone must move from rhetoric prayer to action prayer as Peter Wagner posited, "Action prayer is a two way: we talk to God and listen for a response from Him."⁸

Prayer is the most important of all ministries in church, and it creates the atmosphere and binds the powers of darkness, so the gospel of Jesus can go forward and the church can prosper. Yet, this is an area that the majority of churches talk about the most, but practices the least. Every evangelist or minister must know to love God more than church, or people, or anything else. Reverends Y. Jayaraj (General

⁶ Habakkuk 2:4.

⁷ 1 Thessalonians 5:11-24.

⁸ Peter C. Wagner, *Churches that Pray* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993), 81.

Superintendent of All India Assemblies of God, 1996 – 2006), P. S. Rajamani (General Superintendent of South India Assemblies of God, 2002 - 2012), D. Mohan (General Superintendent of All India Assemblies of God), Ivan Satyavratha (Former Principal, Southern Asia Bible College, Bangalore), Robert Jayaraj (Superintendent of North West District Council of the Assemblies of God North India), and Pappy Mathai (Superintendent of Northern District of Assemblies of God of North India) are notable people who spend much time in listening and asking God in prayer. Yet, not very many from the Malayalam District Council (MDC) are found in the observations of the researcher. This defect of personal intimacy with God must be rectified in MDC for a renewal of an evangelism spirit and church growth. Prayer is a privilege for the child of God to enter into the presence of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Prayer is the power. Prayer is the ministry that the servants of God can offer on behalf of the people whom they want to serve. It is the responsibility of God's people to pray for the perishing, and prayer is the answer.

Evangelists and Ministers Must Be Committed to Evangelism as a Process

Churches that desire growth through personal evangelism must be committed to a long-term process, not a one-time event. Rome was not built in a day, and thus church growth must be achieved one step at a time. The process involves innovative core leaders (the leadership core) bringing together a committed and trained support network. In MDC, the presbytery members are the core leaders. They must become active to supervise the area work in Kerala. More presbyters must be trained. Currently,

only forty-six presbyters provide leadership for churches in a region of about twenty million people in the MDC.⁹ It is imperative that more pastors be appointed to pioneer the work in different new areas.

Leadership Should Provide Needful Support and Teaching to Trainees for Effective Evangelism

Where necessary, sectional leaders should know how to test the integrity and purposefulness and to become advocates of adopting new values. By learning the hard way, in the testing periods of ministry, the necessary brokenness that comes from desperation is established as a way of life. This is an attribute of every great biblical leader as Joseph, Moses, or David. It is the necessary surrender of our will to God's will. When one yields, in brokenness to the Holy Spirit, to be used of God for ministry, the experiences of the wondrous grace of God is manifested through the servant of God.

Responsible leaders must expose the tragic state of complacency among members and leadership to stir up, as the eagle does for her young, by teaching and recasting the vision.¹⁰ A leader resistant to learn and to do properly should not be permitted to remain in leadership. He must be asked to step down for an indefinite or definite period of time until he has learned and become convinced of the truth.

The researcher and the leadership should keep a spirit of expectancy by providing needful support to all who are engaged in personal evangelism. They must

⁹ Yearly report 2010 of MDC of Assemblies of God.

¹⁰ Deuteronomy 32:11.

know that church growth is by the grace of God. All Christians should be able to activate their passion for souls by equipping, for innovative ideas, for creative harvesting, for *oikos* penetration (evangelism), and for follow up to bring souls to maturity. MDC churches must follow and promote personal evangelism methods through small groups, and thereby encourage unlimited church growth. It is God's will and plan for the church. Jesus is the researcher's model for everything. Jesus constantly modeled small groups as he called a core group of twelve Apostles to serve us a prototype for small groups. Small groups formed the basic community through which leaders would emerge for every generation until Jesus returns. It is God's plan for the church, and it follows the New Testament's precise instruction.

The return route to church growth through personal evangelism and small groups is a vigorous work. New thinking and new possibilities based on the New Testament can provide nurturing, accountability, equipping, discipling, leadership training, and more evangelism.

Evangelists Must Truly Love People with Compassion

From the observation survey, it is understood that those who are effective in evangelism are lovers of people more than paperwork. They want to love people as God the Father, Jesus the Savior, the Holy Spirit the Comforter love people.¹¹ An evangelist must express genuine love for the people as Paul and Barnabas, Peter, and Timothy expressed their love. God's love was expressed in action (sharing His love to all),

¹¹ John 3:16, Romans 5:8, John 14-16.

extraordinary in choice (of unworthy sinners), extensive in offer (to the entire world), expensive in sacrifice (by giving His son to die), exclusive in its bestowal (but only to those who believe), exceptional in works (they should not perish), and eternal in blessings. The cultivation of love for people takes on different forms. It can mean understanding the deep needs of people and being compassionate towards those needs. It can mean forgiving people when they have hurt you or your family. It can mean choosing to love someone when they are responding to you in unloving ways. All these things happen in personal evangelistic ministries.

When there are tension-filled situations, evangelists should know to release that atmosphere by leading the audience to a tension-free state by narrating a humorous story or joke, so that they can listen further to the message of the gospel. Humor should never get in the way of the message but help it to be heard by those who may be initially resistant. The researcher has found a few among the pioneer leaders to have a sense of humor with their storytelling approach of reaching out to people. Man of God, Pastor A.C. Samuel, the first National Superintendent and South India General Superintendent, whom the researcher has seen, is one such example. The evangelist must be convinced that with Christ there is endless hope, and without Christ there will be a hopeless end.

All Evangelists Must Be Tenacious

Every minister and evangelist must be tenacious, holding tightly the personal commitment to share the gospel to the last. This tenaciousness is expressed in their

personal desire and decision to live for Christ and to stand until the last breath of life for the gospel, being faithful unto death and to hold on what they have until he comes.¹²

The Results of the Study

The researcher believes that personal evangelism by committed Christians is God's will and plan for the church because it is biblical. Its structure is articulated in both the Old and New Testaments. The church has a clear mandate from the master Jesus Christ to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."¹³

The model of personal evangelism and small groups, more than any other modern-day method, proves to serve as a vehicle of evangelism and discipleship to fulfill the task that Jesus left to the church. Personal evangelists need wisdom and power, as Stephen had courage and wisdom by the Spirit, so that no one could stand against him. He must be able to do follow-up teaching with his hearers or entrust the listeners of the gospel to others who are able to do further work. This ministry has long-lasting influence. If any hearer is not saved, he cannot escape from God by claiming to have not heard the gospel at least one time in his life.

¹² Hebrews 13: 7-8, Revelation 2:10, 3:11, 2 Timothy 4:7-8.

¹³ Matthew 28:19-20.

Results of Evangelistic Impact on the Trivandrum Area

The researcher is a missionary who came from Central Kerala to Southern Kerala, living in Trivandrum as his center of work. He traveled extensively through the length and breadth of the Trivandrum and Kanniyakumari districts. The Assemblies of God had only 22 church stations when he came to this area in 1973.¹⁴ Working with local leaders, pastors, and evangelists, he has put these factors of growth into practice and labored in the vineyard of God. As a result, about 500 churches have been built, and members have grown from 1500 to about 40,000.¹⁵ The researcher rejoices in his part in establishing the work of God with other dedicated leaders and ministers. He shared in this ministry in Southern Kerala with other denomination's churches, such as the India Pentecostal Church of God, Full Gospel Church of God, Apostolic Church of God, Sharon Church, and other independent churches. Other ministry movements involved include Jesus Calls, Jesus Heals, Friends' Missionary Prayer Band, Tribal Mission, and Gospel in Action Fellowship, Collegiate Ambassador's Movement, Christ Ambassadors, and Intercollegiate Prayer Fellowship. He personally influenced Brother Suresh Babu, Ajith Kumar, N. Peter, and Abraham Thomas from this area, and they are now engaged in large-scale ministry.

The researcher has experience in pioneering churches and congregations, in places such as Karetu, Mannanthala, Randanchira, Munnamood, Kilimanoor, and reviving churches in Nalanchila, Perukada, and Anayara. The present church also has

¹⁴ Report of the Trivandrum Area of the Malayalam District Council of Assemblies of God – Year 1973.

¹⁵ Report of the Trivandrum Area of the Malayalam District Council of Assemblies of God – Year 2010

outstations in Petta, Aakkulam, and Oruwadillkotta. The researcher has traveled to about 20 countries of the world, and has seen the growth of the work of the Lord. He has helped U.S. missionaries, Rev. Earnest Sorbo and Mrs. Philis Sorbo, translating their speeches from English to Malayalam, and he has experience traveling with them to existing churches in the Trivandrum and Kanyakumari districts. While he was serving on the executive committee as Secretary, Treasurer, and Committee Member, the researcher shared in moving church problems to solutions and settlement with senior pastors P.D. Johnson, P.O. Cherian, and Dr. Isaac V. Matthew. Unlike in other regions, there have been no court cases among the churches, ministers, or the executive committee. The researcher found the earlier mentioned church growth factors, and many more, to be relevant for church growth. These are only a few experiences of the researcher narrated to bring glory to the Lord.

While thanking God for the things already done through servants of God, we expect a lot more to be done for the greater glory of God. Luke 15 shows God is like a shepherd who looks for one lost sheep, a woman who seeks a lost coin, and a father waiting for his prodigal to return. This is why we are unsatisfied until the majority that is still to come enter into his fold. The researcher believes that if the church members are motivated, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, the lost world can be won. The lost people of Kerala could be won by each individual believer if they do evangelism personally.

By trying to put these factors into practice in the researcher's church, it is impacting the Assemblies of God Society. Members are reaching out to hundreds of

people in their town every week. This is a blessed experience for the researcher because it is as if he speaks to evangelists and ministers every week in his church. Still, we are looking forward to a greater impact in the society for the greater glory of God in the coming days.

Implications of the Study

The researcher wants to suggest one major factor that can lead to church growth, upon which other major factors largely depend. The one major factor is that of the roles and characteristics of leadership. This can cover all other major factors, reflecting the sayings, “As the leader is, so are the people,” and “As the master is, so are the pupils.” The vision for evangelism that shows the power of personal evangelism must begin with the leadership. It is their vision, commitment to prayer, model family life, and ability to wait for wisdom - with anointing, instruction, and understanding the time of the Lord. In his aptness to teach the faithful, faithfulness in enduring suffering for the Lord, he must love God more than anything, and he must love people. He must have patience to win his own soul.

The credibility of leaders, their ability to open the hearts of people to the truths, must be always accompanied with a spirit of expectancy of what God can do. He himself must model a lifestyle of evangelism, with harvesting events daily. It must become a core value of the church he represents. Lifestyle evangelism is evangelism that reaches friends, relatives, and acquaintances as one goes about his daily life.

It can also be identified as *oikos* evangelism. *Oikos* is the Greek term meaning “household.” *Oikos* evangelism reaches friends, relatives, and acquaintance within one’s sphere of influence, doing so in times of joy or sorrow. It teaches the most basic form for reaching individuals at all levels. It fits into a newly forming community and is least disrupted. It builds a broad network for a future harvest, forming small groups. It helps control the number of dysfunctional people who are brought into a small group during the critical time of establishing a community. It trains to win responsive seekers and hard-core unbelievers.

Leaders must follow the Lord faithfully, just as Paul stated he did.¹⁶ Leadership should transition the church from passivity to activity by exhorting, warning and communicating properly and effectively. An active church is one that has leadership open to change. They are aware of the latest trends in the church growth arena. The active church is alert to the spiritual and physical health of their church. They ask hard questions, such as, “Is our church on a plateau or in a decline in attendance?”

Leadership must have a real understanding of human behavior, and a capacity to establish and maintain relationships. They must understand counseling and pastoral care. They should be willing and capable to work with others who share the same goals. They must know the community resources by implementing the excellence of giving.¹⁷ They must have a reasonable understanding of self, self-adjustment, self-control, feelings, guilt, frustrations, and more.

¹⁶ 2 Corinthians 9:9-23.

¹⁷ 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, 1 Corinthians 16: 1-4, Acts 11:27-30, Romans 15: 22-33.

Contribution of the Study

This exploration of the power of personal evangelism to stimulate church growth has been an exciting and challenging study. The researcher firmly believes that all the what, where, how, who, when, and why presented in the study are keys to understanding the importance of personal evangelism to stimulating significant church growth. The researcher believes that the most important finding is the importance of understanding the Scriptures. Some of the most crucial teachings include: The Scriptures of Christ, his teaching, his suffering, his resurrection from the dead on the third day, his ascension to heaven at the right hand of the Father, the sending of the Holy Spirit to empower all believers, seeing the church as the redeemed and the redeeming community, preaching in his name in all the nations, and repentance and remission of sins beginning at home to the uttermost parts.

The question this thesis-project sought to ask is *why personal evangelism*? The researcher attempted to express in this study his conclusion that in Kerala, the church has not grown as it should have been growing at New Testament levels. New Testament levels are the value system for church growth. The church needs to change its operations in rejoicing in Christ, in prayer, in thinking, and in actions.¹⁸ Then, God's manifestations will be present more. Is the present church enjoying the full life of God? Is it filled with the fullness of God as Paul prayed for Ephesians: the prayer of enlightenment, the prayer of empowerment, the prayer of enthronement, the prayer of

¹⁸ Philippians 4:4-10, Isaiah 64:1-4.

enrichment?¹⁹ Are members ready to ask the following to show readiness for evangelism personally? One may have to ask, “Am I a personal evangelist, using the available opportunities for God’s glory?” All born again Christian believers must examine themselves. They must, individually and frequently ask themselves a number of questions:

1. Do I live and prioritize my life as one convinced that this is God’s plan for the church’s survival and spread?
2. Am I completing all the equipping requirements as Bereans did (Acts 17:11)?
3. Have I made preparation for evangelism a top priority?
4. Am I living for the glory of God? (1 Cor.10:31-33)
5. Are all my immediate members involved in personal evangelistic and small group ministry?
6. Do I really believe everyone needs to be an evangelist?
7. Do I disciple someone else at all times?
8. Am I adding and multiplying to the kingdom of God through personal evangelism and discipleship?
9. Am I a true lover of Christ and feeding the flock (John 21:15-17)?

All believers must believe that the Holy Spirit is leading us into greater reformation. He is leading through every leadership training session, every equipping meeting, and every spiritual encounter. They should check whether it is according to the Word of God. They must proclaim, “It begins with me, and it is catching on.” God has called every believer to become a movement within the greater context of the movement of the local church. Every believer must understand that he has great potential in God’s economy.²⁰ When one spends quality time in one’s listening study-

¹⁹ Ephesians 3:14-21.

²⁰ Philemon 4.

room, speaking with God and listening to him, God will enable him to escape the boundaries of his fears and enter the possibilities of his faith.²¹

Future Work Suggested

The researcher's attempt to look into the importance and power of personal evangelism impacted him and changed some of his concepts of ministry. He will cherish the memories of his visits and his observations of trainees, leaders, and church members. The researcher wishes to publish biographies of past leaders, such as Pastors P. D. Johnson, D. Enoch, G. Philippose, R. Rasalam, K. Lazar, M. Chellayam, R. Samuel, E.A. Sorbo, Earl Stubbs, David Grant, K. J. Joseph, K. J. John, and P. D. Thomas, who were an example and a blessing to the researcher to inspire a new generation in personal evangelism. The researcher also wishes to establish more reading rooms in churches, publishing houses, encouraging others for more missionary journeys, establishing Bible college centers as more practical study centers, and developing more free preachers, expecting future rewards from the Lord.²² The researcher is also open to expressing some of his insights learned, and the possibilities of church growth, with new thinking in articles and in the development of a book. His intention for all this is for the greater glory of God.

²¹ 1 Chronicles 4:9-10.

²² 2 Corinthians 11:7-9, Hebrews 13:5, 6.

Distribution of Power and the Importance of Personal Evangelism that Stimulates Church Growth

The reasons why churches are not growing, due to an unawareness of biblical facts are as follows:

1. Salvation of Jesus Christ is the free gift (Romans 3:21-25,10:9-10; Eph.2:8-10)
2. Ministers can have enlightenment (Eph.1:15-19)
3. Only a few ministers using the available opportunities (Luke 16:9-13, Eph.5:15-21)
4. Tendency of ministers for moving to other places for imaginary comforts
5. Ministers not remembering the teachers that taught them and what they have learned with gratitude (2 Tim.3:14-16; Heb.13:7,13,17)
6. Leaders are fearful in launching out new projects. Leaders are not giving proper counsel. Leaders should not be after vainglory by seeking titles and positions (Phil 2: 19-22).

The church should return to the basics of the Bible by preaching the following truths:

1. Every minister or personal evangelist must present the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:17-35).
2. Every minister or personal evangelist must seek a deep intimacy between God himself through prayer and fellowship with God (Col.2:1-8).
3. Personal evangelist and ministers must set a model in relationship with their families (1Tim.3:1-13).

4. Personal evangelist and ministry must commit to the process (Hab.2:1-3).
5. Leadership should provide needful support and teaching to trainees.
6. Personal evangelist must truly love people with compassion.
7. Personal evangelists should develop a sense of hope and humor.
8. All evangelists must be tenacious, holding tightly the personal commitment till the end.

Conclusion

The expressed factors for effectiveness have been discovered through surveys and through observing different candidates and asking questions and getting answers from them. Precedent, survey, statistical and descriptive research shows the effects upon the vision, and passion for the fulfillment of the Great Commission through evangelism done personally by all the committed Christians in the past, now, or done in the coming days. If evangelists act upon this godly knowledge of vision, beliefs, attitudes, and practices, they are more likely to win the state and the country for Christ's glory.

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VITA

Tharamalethu John Rajan was born on June 5th, 1949, to Mariamma and T. M. Yohannan, in Thazhava, Kerala, India. T. J. Rajan received the call for full-time ministry in 1970 while working in Calcutta after his college education. After graduating with the Bachelor of Religion degree from Southern Asia Bible College, Bangalore in 1973, he started his ministry as a translator to Missionary E. A. Sorbo at Trivandrum. He was involved with the Youth Wing of the Assemblies of God, Christ Ambassadors, from the year 1973 to 1981, and worked among the College Students (Collegiate Ambassadors). He also earned his Bachelor of Divinity (BD) degree from Serampore University, and Master of Arts degree in Sociology from Kerala University. He has pastored numerous churches in the Trivandrum Area since 1975, including Nalanchira, Kilimanoor, Peroorkada, Anayara, and currently pastors at Enikkara Assemblies of God church. He has also planted different churches in the area.

T. J. Rajan was appointed as the faculty of Bethel Bible College, Punalur in 1984, and continues as a Part-time faculty along with his Pastoral ministry till today. The researcher has also served the Assemblies of God community in various leadership roles as the CA President of the South West District that included the Kerala and the Southern District from 1976 – 1981. He also served as the Secretary, Treasurer, and Committee Member of the Malayalam District Council of the South India Assemblies of God from the year 1988 for many years.